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Christmas Number

Dance and Dancers

DECEMBER 1961

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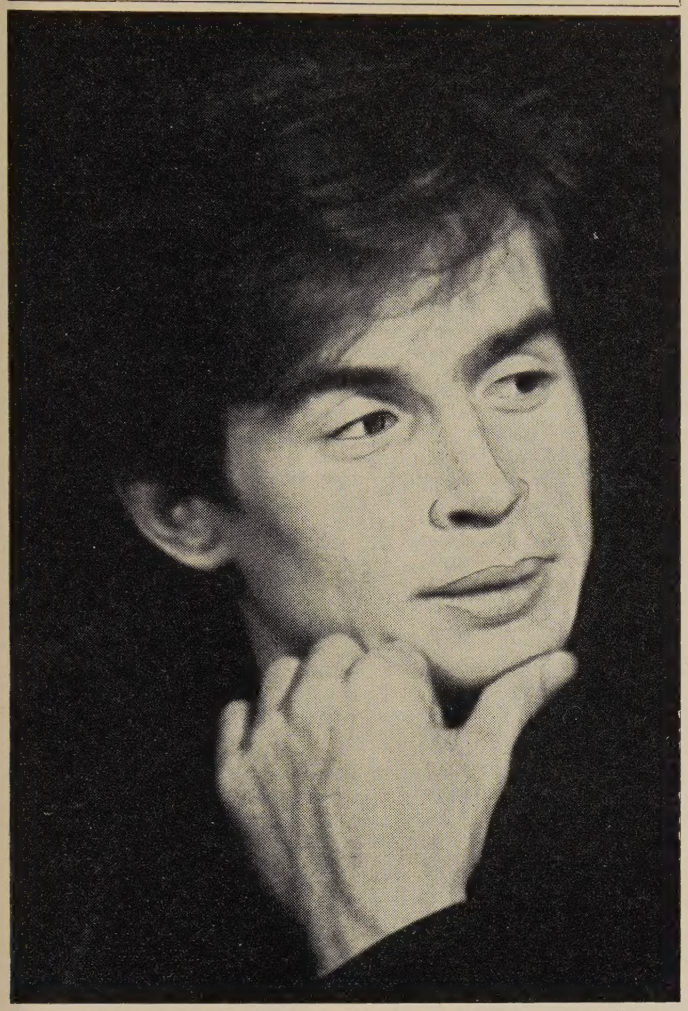

Photo : Anthony Crickmay

RUDOLF NUREYEV

THE quality of greatness in a dancer is as indefinable as beauty. One can draw up a list of virtues you would expect a great dancer to possess and when a neat line has been drawn under the total you would have missed the one essential thing that transforms the merely magnificent to the truly great. In the final analysis you are brought back to the idea that a great dancer is a dancer whom a sufficient number of people, all sufficiently well-informed, think great. The number of people at the Drury Lane Theatre for Dame Margot's matinee on November 8 could, in the nature of things, not be that large; and certainly to judge from its hyena baying and general behaviour no one in their right senses could call well-informed. But that audience clearly thought that in Rudolf Nureyev it was seeing a great dancer, and we think their judgment will be confirmed in time by the knowledgeable ballet public.

Nureyev is no paragon like Bruhn, and no immediate sensation like Soloviev. He has faults which can hardly pass unnoticed, and the very individuality of his manner comes as a surprise — especially when on his British début we had been primed by the French press to expect a "Golovine", a dancer with whom he would appear to have nothing in common whatsoever. Yet, make no mistake, he is the sort of dancer on whom legends alight.

It seems unfortunate that this young Russian (and his youth should, incidentally, always be taken into account in assessing his qualities and potentialities) has been made the subject of so much partisan feeling. It is doubly unfortunate that politics — first politics political and later politics balletic — have also made their appearance and served to fog up the atmosphere. Finally, in their startling discovery that he has much to learn, a few people seem to have forgotten how much he has got of things that never can be learnt.

DECEMBER 1961 12th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 12 No. 12

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor: E. C. Mason.
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

The Cloud on our Star

HOWEVER distressing the situation may be in the rest of the world, one factor shines out bright and clear like the star of Bethlehem on a cloudless morning — the year that is just drawing to a close has been a peak one for British ballet. All the major companies have done well — successful in London, the provinces and overseas — but the crowning triumph has been the exchange between the Kirov Ballet from Leningrad and the Royal Ballet from London. The importance of this dual occasion cannot be overstressed. All those immediately connected with both companies should continue to ponder over these visits, to learn and to correct, because properly considered the lessons learned could advantageously change the whole course of ballet history in both Russia and in England.

Yet such peak moments can lead to smugness and be even more dangerous, eventually, than are the low moments. The slight cloud that passes over the star should act as the barb to goad us out of any post-prandial nap we might be considering. We have ridden to success on our dancers and our choreographers and eventually, judging by the way things have developed lately, we may be helped on by our designers. But nobody could say that we even cantered anywhere with *our* composers — almost without exception they have been foreign. Why is that? Have we no composers for ballet in England? Yes, of course we have, but either they are not interested or they are not encouraged.

Music is what gives the dance its national flavour and ballet in England at the moment has not acquired this flavour. Heaven forbid that we should have endless works to "hey nonny no" but we do desperately need ballets which reflect something of our island heritage — its history, its literature, its folklore, its legends and its general way of life. For an island race so rich in all these things we have paid scant heed to them when it comes to ballet making. This applies not only to our music but also to ballet's subject matter.

It is interesting that the Russians noticed this lapse and commented upon it. When France, America, Russia, the Scandinavian and Balkan countries all manage works with a national flavour, it seems strang that we, with so many companies of which we have just reason to be proud, continue to neglect something that is on our very doorsteps and in our blood. So with that thought to give slight indigestion after your Christmas dinner, I join the staff of *Dance and Dancers* in —

Wishing you happiness for Christmas wherever you may be and may 1962 bring you joy, even if only in ballet.

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New Company for Gore

Walter Gore's London Ballet at Oxford

by CLIVE BARNES

Photographed by REG WILSON

Co-existence — this is a theme of importance for every minority interest. The pattern of ballet is most delicately poised in Britain.

ALTHOUGH I had seen Walter Gore's London Ballet briefly at its semi-alfresco début at the Hintlesham Festival during the summer, its week's season at the Oxford Playhouse at the end of September was my first opportunity to have a close look at it.

It seems to me that every new ballet group has to be considered in two ways. Firstly its own intrinsic merits must be taken into account. Secondly, and even more importantly, it must be regarded in the light of the existing pattern of British ballet. For example, if a company arose that was closely similar to London's Festival Ballet, no better or no worse, the same size, battling for the same theatres and audiences with a similar repertory and similar style of dancers, the first responsible question to be asked would be: "Could the ballet market support two companies of this nature?" It may be that with a split share of the existing market now taken by Festival Ballet, *both* companies would collapse or at least be reduced in effectiveness. If this sounds more like business than ballet, I would remind you that ballet is business, and we of the specialist ballet audience have a vital, vested interest in seeing that it is properly carried out.

A surplus of ballet could do harm to the whole art, and we were given an object lesson in this during the disastrous boom-period in ballet between 1945 and 1955. Every company must be artistically and economically viable before it is worth our support. Any group, large or small, that makes only a marginal artistic contribution, yet at the same time imperils the livelihood or standards of the existing companies, should as far as possible be ruthlessly put down like a dog with rabies.

Of course, it is almost impossible to guess how close British ballet is to saturation point with the ballet audience. The first reports of this year's provincial tours have been encouraging, box-office business has been fairly consistently good (with one or two real highspots of sold-right-out houses), and this comes at a time when there have been more companies on the road than at any period for some years. To a certain extent the more (good) ballet people are given, the more ballet people will want (and, incidentally, the specialist ballet audience itself can do a great deal to publicise and propagate ballet among the general public), so we still have the possibility of an expanding market.

However, every company must be good enough, creative enough (at least to some modest extent), imaginative enough, forceful enough and *different* enough to grab a share of that expansion without treading on anyone else's point-shoes. There is no room in British ballet for companies that are cannibals or pirates. And there is even less room for companies whose artistic standards are so low that they give the public a false idea of ballet, and this includes those terrible school displays for which it should be a criminal offence to charge for admission. This is the light in which *Dance and Dancers* intends to look at all new companies, and these are the primary considerations we took into account in looking at Walter Gore's London Ballet.

THE CLASSICS: Above, a revival of Fokine's Les Sylphides *(with a reproduction of a Corot painting as setting) with Paula Hinton, Alexis Rassine, Jill Bathurst and Robin Haig. Below,* Giselle *Act 2 with Rassine as Albrecht, Jill Bathurst as Giselle and Anna Price as Myrthe.*

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THE BALLETS

UNDOUBTEDLY Gore's London Ballet has got off to an excellent start. Even in these early days in Oxford it had a style and individuality of its own, and potentially it could play a most useful part in the British scene.

In size it is a small to medium group, consisting of about two dozen dancers. This places it neatly between the smaller Western Theatre Ballet and the larger Ballet Rambert, the two existing companies with which it has most in common. This is an adaptable size for a small company, for it means the repertory can range from scaled-down, yet still reasonable, versions of those *ballets blanc* so much in demand with provincial managers, right down to a small chamber ballet for two or three people.

Walter Gore, the company's sole choreographer as well as its artistic director, has some experience in forming ballet companies, both at home and abroad. Consequently he has not fallen into any of the usual traps, notably that very dangerous trap of imagining it is an ultimate economy to do things on the cheap. Money has obviously not been thrown around, yet the group has a modest air of comfort and well-being if not actual opulence. The sets are simple but good, and, most importantly, well hung. The wardrobe is kept in mint condition, with everything neat, crisp and tidy. The whole company, including its dancers, look professional — and if you don't think that is worthy of comment then you can't have seen much small-company ballet.

Apart from the three "classics" the ballets are all by Gore, and this is a mistake. No choreographer has yet succeeded in creating a full-time repertory by himself. (Robbins is a nindividual case, for his "showcase" programmes, invariable and specially designed, do not really come under the heading of repertory company.) Gore possesses considerable variety of type of ballet, but far less variety in his choreography. Without any doubt the London Ballet will be a much stronger force when it enlists the services of another choreographer, preferably someone whose approach to ballet would have something in common with Gore's, but whose actual choreography was markedly different. Antony Tudor would be the ideal person who immediately springs to mind, but there may be others. Equally a number of carefully selected ballets by different choreographers might fill the bill just as well. The company also needs one or two more top dancers. The soloists have been well chosen, but at present they have to work too hard, and the gap between them and the more than adequate *corps de ballet* is slightly too wide for comfort.

Every programme opens with one of the detergent commercials, which Gore has produced whiter than most. I missed their version of *Les Sylphides* (embellished with a borrowing from Corot — I wonder, in passing, how this Besançon *petit maître* ever got inextricably tangled with *Les Sylphides?),* but the *Swan Lake,* Act 2, and the *Giselle,* Act 2, were decent within their limitations. The *Swan Lake* has a most striking backcloth derived by Disley Jones from a painting by Turner, and Jones has carried out a similar old-master theft, rather less successfully, for *Giselle,* this time purloining a Böcklin. Neither ballet has painted wings, and this is a pity, the one piece of obvious economy visible.

Of the two classics I saw, *Giselle* was the better produced, having a quality of

THE FAIR MAID : *Two pictures of Gore's recent work to Bizet music which concerns itself with the dances around a marriage ceremony. Above are Simon Mottram and Jill Bathurst. Below is Jill Bathurst with the company in the setting and costumes designed by Andrée Howard.*

LES JOYEUX *(above): Paula Hinton and Simon Mottram in Gore's newest work to Poulenc's* Sonata for Flute and Piano.

EATERS OF DARKNESS *(below): Paula Hinton and Roger Tully in Gore's serious ballet, created originally in Frankfurt and based on the 19th-century story of a newly-married wife who is committed to an asylum by her husband to serve his own ends. Eventually she really does become insane.*

authority the *Swan Lake* just missed. Like the production as a whole, Odette was cleanly danced by Jill Bathurst. She was rather o'erparted, not as yet having the style and particular quality of magnificence that can justify a ballerina's diadem, yet she danced well within her limitations. She was authoritatively partnered by Alexis Rassine, who looked in far better form than on his last Covent Garden appearance. He danced a neat, albeit unspectacular solo, but he had the right Romantic air. The other day I heard a foreign Siegfried called, with more truth than charity, "one of nature's Bennos"; Rassine, on the other hand, is every inch the Prince. Mannered and, to that extent, old-fashioned he may be; bourgeois never.

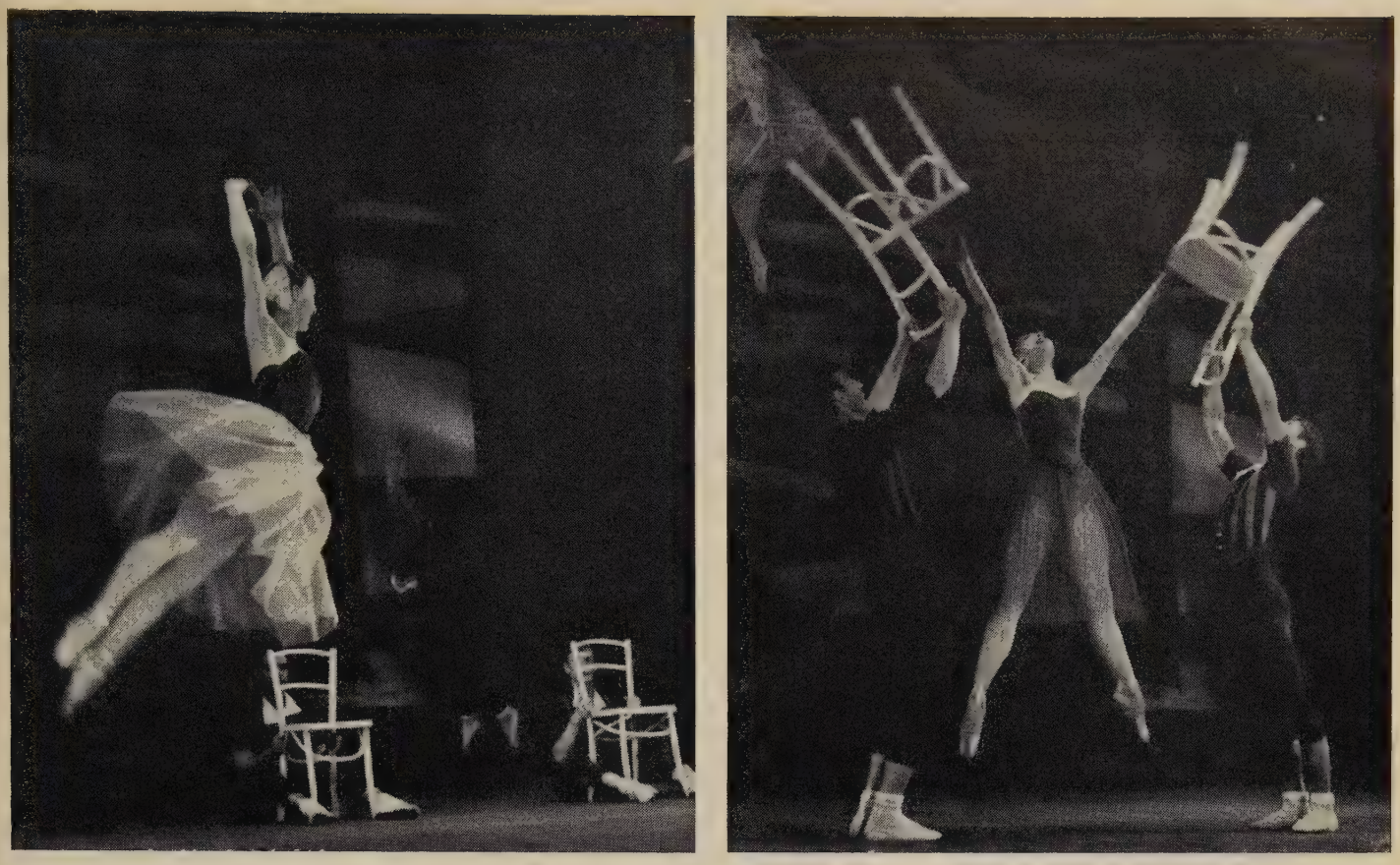
The same pair, Bathurst and Rassine, are the first cast in *Giselle* (it seemed a thousand pities that the programming did not allow Hinton to be seen in this), but at the matinee performance I saw, Albrecht was taken by Simon Mottram. Bathurst's Giselle had all the character drained out of it, which is a quite and subtly different thing from a Giselle with all the characterisation drained out of it. Her dancing tended towards spikiness at its extremities, but most of all it missed the force of personality.

Mottram impressed me most favourably. He has peregrinated around the companies so rapidly, that he now only needs a spell with Western Theatre Ballet to establish a unique record. After starting with Ballet Rambert (as Kenneth Mott), moving to the Royal Ballet, transferring to Festival Ballet, and now turning up with Gore, Mottram has undeniably got some service in. Unfortunately so far none of his many and various companies has found the way to use him to best advantage, but whether this is the cause or the effect of his migrations I do not know. This time, however, he seems to have struck lucky, for he was dancing with a lot more confidence than ever before. Potentially Mottram could be a very good dancer indeed; his technique is strong, as is his partnering, he is good-looking, well-built and has an agreeable stage personality. On the strength of this Albrecht and his other appearances, I would say Gore is bringing the best out in him, and he should develop most interestingly.

Anna Price, the Queen of the Wilis, had lightness and a well-sprung jump, although she lacked something of the requisite authority for the part. Both in *Giselle* and *Swan Lake,* the coryphée rôles were well filled by Robin Haig, Maureen Connor, Wendy Barker, Janet Kinson and Moya Knox, in addition to Anna Price.

However adequately potted these classics may be, the *raison d'être* of the company is unquestionably Gore's own ballets. Some are revivals; while others have been specially created for this new group. The revivals include *Peepshow,* which I did not see at Oxford but wrote about when it was produced in Hintlesham, *Light Fantastic,* and *Night and Silence,* together with *Eaters of Darkness,* first produced in 1957 at Frankfurt-am-Main but never before seen in Britain.

The most important of all these works is probably the "ballet of jealousy", *Night and Silence.* As this grippingly compulsive dramatic ballet was considered fully in these pages two months ago, it is unnecessary to dwell on its qualities. Seen in a small theatre it takes on an even greater power, and the performances of Paula Hinton and Gore himself are dramatically as fine as anything seen in British ballet since the war.



LIGHT FANTASTIC: *Paula Hinton in the revival of a work first given by the Walter Gore Ballet some years ago. In the picture left she is seen with Simon Mottram, in the one on the right with Barrie Wilkinson and Jens Graff.*

Light Fantastic shows the waggish side to Gore's choreographic coinage at fairest advantage. With its Chabrier music, some of which has already done turn for De Valois in *Bar aux Folies Bergère,* Balanchine in *Bourrée Fantasque* and Petit in *Ballabile,* this typically Gore romp first and briefly saw the light of day during Gore's ill-fated season at the Prince's Theatre in 1953. It then had scenery and costumes by Kenneth Rowell, now they are described as being by James Deakin. I say "described" advisedly for the backcloth looks to me as if it was that designed by John Diebel for Taras's ballet *Octet* produced by the Edinburgh Festival Ballet in 1958. Perhaps James Deakin and John Diebel are one and the same person. In any event he, they or someone else have not been particularly well-advised to string paper cut-out dolls at the front of this backcloth, for the setting is now carried out in two quite distinct styles, in which the original Diebel comes off better than his new *alter ego.*

The ballet is prefaced by the coyly off-putting quotation: "In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of ——", but the work is anything but coyly off-putting. Vigorously oncoming would be a fairer description. This parade of woo and wooing is carried out with the sort of light touch that ensures a perfect omelette. It goes on too long (a common Gore failing; he has always had difficulty in judging a ballet's *natural* length) and it makes too obvious and hearty a use of various props, such as those flying cut-out dolls and Petit-style chairs. For all this it has brilliance, charm and an unusual sense of grotesque absurdity. It also makes an admirable vehicle for its ebullient cast, led dashingly by Paula Hinton and Simon Mottram, with Henry Haythorne and Jane Evans in the broader comedy rôles.

Eaters of Darkness is another of Gore's serious dramatic works. The programme tells us it is "based on an English case-history of the 19th-century. It tells of a newly-married wife who was committed to an asylum by her husband to serve his own ends. Though not insane at the time, she became so by reason of what happened to her there." Unfortunately in Oxford, and throughout the company's British provincial tour, the ballet was seen in a crippled state, the crippling having been done by that short-sighted body the Musicians' Union. When the ballet was first produced in Frankfurt it was set to Benjamin Britten's *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge.* The small but perfectly adequate pit band which Gore has gathered for the tour was not large enough to cope with the score. Gore could not afford to enlarge the orchestra (for ridiculous as it sounds those squeaks, wails and thumps you hear from the "typical" ballet orchestra cost more to produce than the dancers — a superb example of Trade Unionism run riot!) and consequently the ballet has to be produced without music.

Why Gore could not be allowed to use a tape-recording for this work must remain a mystery. The fascinating thing is that this kind of restrictive practice lessens the company's chances of success, which in turn jeopardises the jobs of the Musicians' Union members in the small but nevertheless *existing* pit band. If I have digressed on this balletic aspect of what Michael Shanks in his recent book has called *The Stagnant Society,* it is because I, as a left-wing radical, feel particularly strongly about the stupidities of the Unions, and their inflexible blindness in this kind of case. (If the Musicians' Union has a case to put, *Dance and Dancers* will be glad to print it. I personally expect it will prefer, like its musicians, to remain silent.)

To return to *Eaters of Darkness* (known in Germany as *Die im Schatten leben),* its frenetic drama is not really suitable for the puffs and creaks of the so-called "silent" dance. It needed music to organise and rarefy its purple splashes of emotionalism. Even so it emerged as potentially an important work. Madness — always a popular subject with choreographers—is here presented in a far less stylised way than in, say, De Valois' *The Rake's Progress* or Janine Charrat's *Les Algues.*

The lunatic inmates of this subterranean world are conceived in terms of expressionist movement, while the sane woman, superlatively danced by Hinton, is given classical choreography, her plaintive *arabesques* and desperate jumps contrasting with the shambling background of movement. The horror of the story, which is greatly helped by James Deakin's imaginatively claustrophobic setting, never loosens its grip, and gains much from the simplicity of its black-and-white hysteria. Natural questions (why is the woman incarcerated in this mad jungle? why are the lunatics completely unsupervised?) are forgotten, while the mind is held by the demanding shriek of Gore's fancy.

Such a work demands compulsive playing from its cast. Hinton, as would only be expected, is outstanding. Her dancing has a clean quality of pure classicism, which places her apart from what we think of as the usual run of dance-actresses. Her dancing has an heroic air, and here she beats against the air like a trapped white bird with haunted eyes.

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When Ballet was Born

Ballet, in the form we know it today, was born in Italy during the Renaissance and few artists have evoked the spirit of the dance spectacles of this time more graphically than is shown in the paintings of Andrea Mantegna.

by MARIO AMAYA

THE artist has never been closer to the creation of the dance than he was throughout the Italian Renaissance. Not even in modern times — with the exception of Diaghilev — can we find any parallel to equal the intense activity between dancer and artist that burst out in Italy during the 15th and 16th-centuries. For, at the very moment in history when ballet was being born, sculptor, architect and painter alike, concerned themselves with the creation of magnificent *balletti,* and the spectacular settings they devised were just as much a part of the performance as the dances.

With the Renaissance in Florence at the beginning of the *quattrocento,* a new deal deluged dancer and artist. Both looked for inspiration to the ancient Romans, whose stones had lain buried for centuries beneath their feet. The marvels of antiquity opened a whole new world of images to the artist; for the dancer, it provided an opportunity to recapture the essence of traditional dances that had never been entirely forgotten. Always more elaborate than the steps in France or Spain, Italy's heritage of basic dances had developed through the centuries with innumerable changes and subtleties, making it the richest and most varied vocabulary of movement in existence at that time. Now, the transfusion of classical models from sarcophagi, bas-reliefs and statues, into these traditional steps, lent them a new grandeur and beauty which sought to recapture the enchantment of the ancient world.

The social attitude to dancing changed. No longer was it considered an evil or sinful pastime. Like painting and sculpture, it was fast becoming a source of secular amusement. With new humanist philosophies running rampant, the courts could give showy dance spectacles which might easily rival pagan Rome and yet hardly raise a Papal eyebrow. In fact, these spectacles became overnight the popular attraction not only of court functions but of special religious occasions as well.

The dance was suddenly lifted from the depths of folk custom to the pedestal of fine art, and the individual to whose hands

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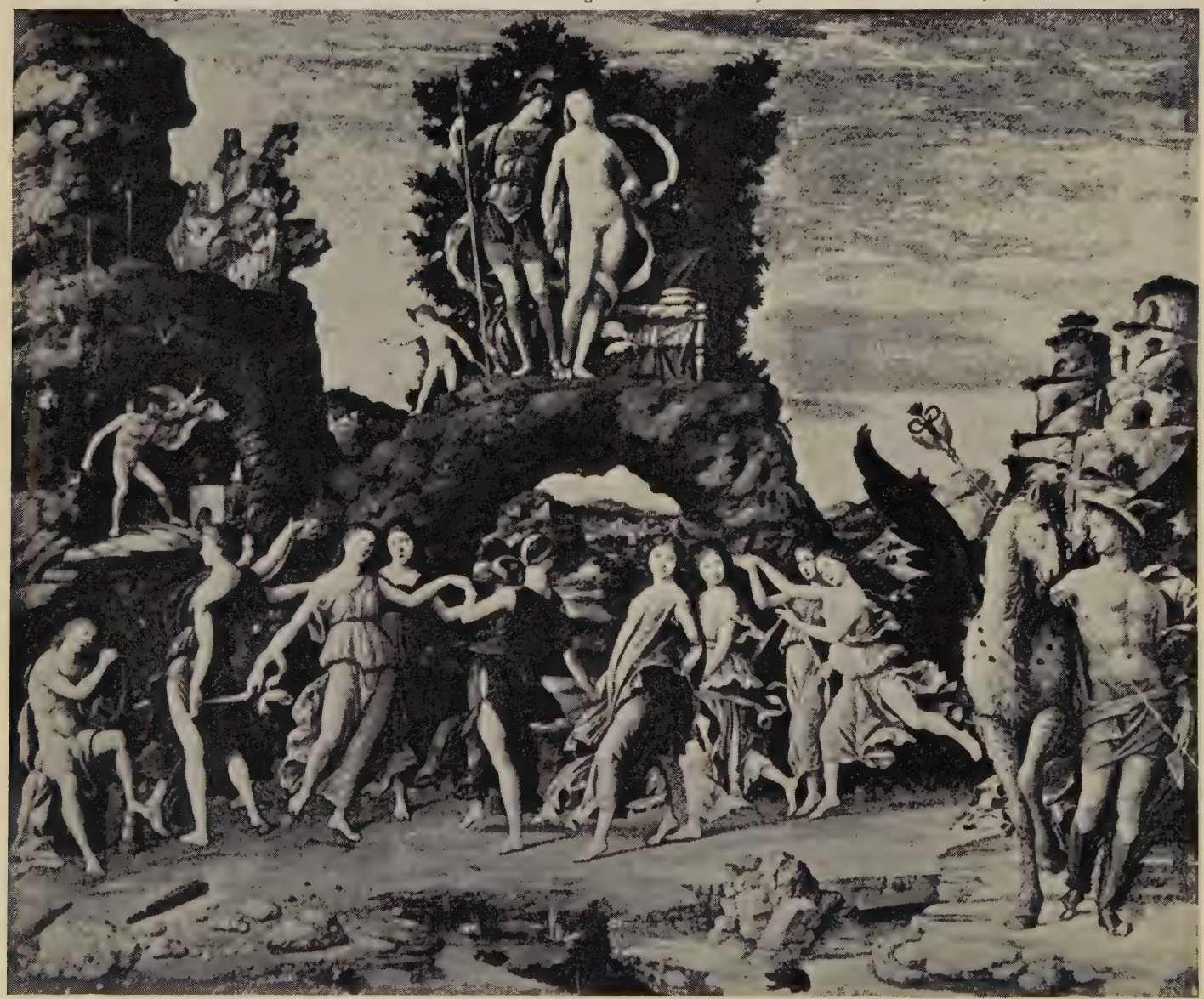
this job was entrusted was the "Dancing Master". A star performer himself, he also had to be a teacher, a choreographer, a musician, a composer, a director and a poet. His major job was to teach the courtiers not only social dancing, but the new complicated steps for his grandiose set-pieces. Besides which he had to arrange the details, organise the music and see to

PARNASSUS, *by Andrea Mantegna, was hung in Isabella d'Este's study in 1497. It is one of the most enchanting summations of both dance and spectacle in the Italian Renaissance. The setting is similar to many used in the 16th century court ballets.*



the management of the whole production, which would most likely have one, and only one, performance, that had to be perfect.

The first recorded Dancing Master that has come down to us from the Renaissance is a Jew named Domenichino da Piacenza, or Piacentino, who wrote as early as 1416 a full account of the revolutionary *balletti* he had created and which had been the sensation of several Italian courts. The first person to use the word *"Balletto"*, Domenichino described such a performance as a suite of classic court dances, arranged with contrasting measures and movements that were combined in one set piece and performed by well-rehearsed courtiers amidst an artistic setting.

We know from Domenichino's student and follower, Guglielmo Ebreo, whose manuscript of dances and instructions is now preserved in the Paris Bibliothèque Nationale (dated 1446), that his master planned one of the first secular *balletti* for the festival celebrating the triumphal entry into Milan of Count Francesco Sforza, who earned himself a dukedom in 1435. Two years later, Guglielmo tells us, Domenichino created a dance spectacle for the wedding ceremony of Leonello d'Este at Ferrara. Unfortunately Guglielmo was too busy concerning himself with rich descriptions of the heavily-laden tables to reveal who did the settings for these *balletti*.

Two years later, we read in Vasari's chatty and inaccurate *Lives of the Painters* that the great Florentine sculptor and architect, Filippo Brunelleschi (who was responsible for the first building of the Renaissance), constructed a wondrous ballet-machine, which became the marvel of all Italy. Noting that it was not the first of such mechanisms, Vasari says it was made in 1439 for the visit to Florence of the Metropolitan Isador on the feast of the *Annunziata*. Constructed in the shape of an inverted bowl, resembling the heavens, it hung from the rafters of the Carmine monastery of San Felice in Piazza, unfortunately, not without doing the roof considerable damage. The biographer goes on to report that this machine was "a most extraordinary thing . . . since there was the spectacle of a heaven full of living figures moving about on high with an infinity of lights, which appeared and disappeared almost as does the lightning". Around the lip of this vast bowl were strapped by iron bands twelve-year-old boys, whom Vasari assures us could not fall. They were dressed to look like angels and "took each other by the hand at the proper time, and waving their arms appeared to be dancing as the basin was perpetually moving and turning around". Above cotton-wool clouds and starry lights was fixed another ring on which stood a "bouquet" of nine-year-olds who were lowered and raised on a windlass as they performed dancing movements. In the centre of the entire basin hung a live Virgin and kneeling adorer, surrounded by the singing and dancing children. Although he admits he never saw it himself, Vasari assures us that this delightful display was a true "Paradiso".

But apart from these religious scenes there were marvellous secular scenes as well. Guglielmo's book records no less than fifteen such *ballis* for the nobility. In the services of Leonello d'Este, at least from 1441 until the end of his reign in 1450, Guglielmo mentions two *ballis* done for the Prince of Ferrara. One was called *Leoncello*, after his master, and the other was called *Belriguardo*, after Leonello's country villa on the banks of the Po.

It is easy to reconstruct from these various manuscripts, which so fortunately have survived, the basic steps of the *balletto*. First of all, Guglielmo notes, there are six qualities a dancer must have if he is to demonstrate the full beauty of the dance. These are measure (*Mesura*), memory (*Memoria*), elevation (*Partire de Terreno*), lightness (*Aire*), fluent grace (*Maniera*), and agility (*Movimento Corporeo*). The only thing he misses out, which Domenichino insisted upon, is *Fantasmata*, or the measure of the ground that "assists and inspires the body with sensitive alertness". This quality, which the older master could not stress too strongly, is defined as "bodily rapidity motivated by an understanding of the (rhythmic) measure . . . whereby at each bar one gives an instant's pause . . ."

Both teachers agreed that there were twelve movements in the dance: nine natural, which were performed off-beat, and three accidental, which were done on the accented beat. These were used to make up the three basic steps of the dance, which consisted of the slow *Bassa Danza*, the quicker *Quadernaria* and the liveliest of the lot, the *Saltarello*. This was an offshoot of the *Bassa Danza*, as the *Piva* was an offshoot of the *Quadernaria*. But of them all, the *Bassa Danza*, done in a stately, heirarchic manner, was known as the "Queen of Measures" and was the basis and rule for the others. There is a charming poem in Domenichino's book which goes: "I am the *Bassa Danza*, Queen of Measures; and I deserve to wear the crown: and in my employ few succeed; for those who can dance and play me well, must perforce be gifted of heaven."

In another treatise on the dance by the poet Antonio Cornazano, the *Piva* is defined as "naught else than double paces animated and accelerated by the rapidity of the measure, danced in a spirited fashion". *Saltarello* is explained as "double paces undulated by the elevation of a short second step and as swayed outwards by the springing movement accompanying the first step . . .". Cornazano helpfully gives a definition of the nine natural body movements as being singles, doubles, reprises, counterpaces, high jumps, whole circles, half circles, and revolving turns. The accidental movements, consisting of the scurrying step, flourishes and diminutions, are not suitable for a lady, "excepting, however, the diminutions". As for the high leap, the lady should never include it in her bar and he adds sharply, "Nor the man neither, excepting very occasionally, if he be a skilled dancer".

The ballerina in the Renaissance was certainly a far cry from the female dancer in modern times, and seems to take a less important part in the *balletto*, mainly helping the male through his difficult and showy steps. Cornazano explains that while dancing the *Piva*, it is necessary for the woman to "assist the man in his turns according to the pirouettes and high jumps that he may choose to make . . . it is requisite that she should be alert and well skilled therein for maintaining the measure, which is worth more than the other". She is again tipped off by Guglielmo that she must prevent her glances from being "proud and roving, gazing here and there, as happens with many". Instead her looks must be "honest and for the most part lowered towards the ground".

All these elaborate descriptions give us an excellent picture of the variety, subtlety and charm of the dance movements in the Italian Renaissance. An idea of what the early *balli* looked like can be fully grasped when we realise that all these complicated and sophisticated steps were orchestrated into a highly-finished gala performance.

ISABELLA D'ESTE ? : This cartoon from Munich, attributed to Mantegna by Sir Kenneth Clark, is believed by some modern critics to be of Isabella d'Este. As it was usual for quattroento *patrons to appear in allegories they commissioned and as she had the reputation of being a brilliant dancer, this supposition is not too far-fetched.*

It is tragic that scenery cannot survive as well as books, for the magnificent drop canvases and constructions built by some of the greatest artists the world has ever known have all vanished. Aside from the odd engraving or the stray drawing, we have little or no idea of the settings that surrounded these magnificent spectacles and which took so much energy and time on the part of the painters and architects. It is doubly frustrating to remember that one of the most splendid *balletti* of the *quattrocento*, held to celebrate Galeazzo, Duke of Milan's, marriage to Isabella of Aragon in 1489, had scenery and costumes by Leonardo da Vinci. They have disappeared completely, although there is a very vivid account still existing of how Bergonzio organised the gay dinner-ballet, which was served by dancing gods, goddesses, nymphs and fauns.

One of the rarest sets of semi-stage scenery, still around today, are the *Triumphs* of Andrea Mantegna. These heroic murals, depicting the Triumphal procession of Caesar, were painted by him for Gianfrancesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua, as interior decorations for his palace; but their magnificence and majesty made them so popular that they were soon

put to use as backdrops for plays, spectacles and *balletti*. Although they are now preserved at Hampton Court, their constant use as scenery for court *fêtes* made them so fragile and worn that they are now only shadows of ghosts of what they once were.

Mantegna began his *Triumphs* around 1484, but his work was interrupted four years later when Innocent VIII summoned him to Rome to paint a chapel in the Belvedere. When he returned to Mantua in 1491, he found a new mistress presiding over the court.

Gianfrancesco had married the strong-willed, intelligent and lovely Isabella d'Este of Ferrara. Only sixteen at the time of her wedding, she had already won herself a wide reputation for her knowledge, her love of art, her music-writing and her poetry. Above all, she loved to dance. Isabella's uncle was Leonello d'Este, who had hired Guglielmo to create *balli* for his wedding. The great choreographer-performer taught the entire court at Ferrara his steps and dances and Isabella as a child must have known them intimately. When it was suggested that she might be a possible candidate for the wife of Gianfrancesco, an envoy was sent from Mantua to inspect the six-year-old princess. He watched her dancing with her master, Ambrogio, a Jew like his forerunners Domenichino and Guglielmo, and reported happily that "the grace and elegance of her movements were amazing in one of her tender age". This love of dancing was to continue in Isabella's later life and to prove most useful in handling affairs of state. If not a fondness for dancing, then sheer political sagacity prompted her to "dance merrily" at the ball given by the invading Louis XII of France upon his entry into Milan, while her old friend and brother-in-law, Duke Lodovico Sforza, languished in the prisons below.

As much as Isabella liked dancing, poetry and music, she still found time to commission works of art from modern artists. But she was not as successful with her painters as she was with her poets: once, she threatened to throw a painter into the dungeons if he did not finish decorating her rooms as soon as possible. Another time she warned Perugino severely that he was not to add anything of his own invention to a picture she had asked him to paint. All through her life, she was constantly calling on the most famous masters of the time, such as Giovanni Bellini, Leonardo da Vinci and Correggio, but her school-mistressy attitude rarely got the best out of them. She had to write forty letters to the reluctant Bellini concerning one picture, and fifty-three to Perugino over another. One difficulty was that the would-be poetess insisted that her paintings contain some elaborate allegory or didactic literary moral. Unfortunately, the painters she chose rarely felt her pictorial ideas were suited to their genius.

The most important artistic project that occupied most of Isabella's life was the decoration of her famous *camerini*, a suite of small rooms in the Grotta of the palace, where she hoped to arrange her collection of antiquities amid a display of modern paintings and sculpture. To accomplish this end, she had to suffer innumerable setbacks and disappointments: in the end the rooms cost her more money and trouble than she had ever bargained for.

The first picture she commissioned for the *Studiolo*, or study, was *The Parnassus* by Andrea Mantegna. The court painter for over thirty-five years, it was only natural that Isabella would commission him to do the first of the series of allegories for her walls. Although the ageing and poverty-stricken Mantegna had a reputation for being crusty and complaining, no troubles seem to have arisen over this picture. It was hung in 1497, and five years later was complemented by another illustrating *Minerva Chasing Evil out of the Garden of Virtue*. Like all the other pictures done for Isabella's *Studiolo*, they both hang in the Louvre.

The Parnassus is a strange work, for despite its elaborate mythological ideas, fostered by Isabella and her attendant poets, it still possesses a rare and exquisite beauty. In a loosely-triangular composition, Mars and Venus stand atop a central peak in front of their adulterous bed. In the distance, Vulcan admonishes his faithless wife from his cave and Cupid, who stands close to Mars, blows a scornful trumpet in his face. To the right Mercury steadies his smiling Pegasus and to the left Apollo is seated playing a lyre. The entire foreground of the picture is occupied by nine cavorting Muses, who dance a gay, rhythmic *ronde*. They dance totally unmindful of the comic domestic drama that takes place around them. That Isabella could commission such a light-hearted picture, making fun of infidelity, proves the princess was no prude.

In an amusing and learned study of the picture by Professor Edgar Wind of Harvard, he calls the subject a "mockery". Citing Homer's *Odyssey* as a source for the story, which was introduced as a dancing-song, he finds that the keynote of the painting is the delightful group of Muses. The one on the extreme right, who comes running in as if she were late, is identified as Polyhymnia. She grabs Erato's thumb in a lewd manner, made by encircling the finger with her thumb and pointer. This gesture has no known parallel in Renaissance sculpture or painting. While Renaissance dancers might hold a partner's hand by interlocking pinkies or by grasping wrists or palms, it is most unusual for the thumb to be held in such a suggestive way. The gesture reoccurs in Roman sculpture, but it is always the middle finger which is held. One wonders what antique bas-relief Mantegna may have taken this gesture from or what could have prompted him to insert such an idea into the picture. The illicit love affair between Mars and Venus may have been the inspiration for this curious gesture. Next to Polyhymnia and Erato are Terpsichore and Thalia to complete the group of the four Frivolous Muses. Some critics can see in the plump feature of Thalia the round-faced Isabella. In the drawing for this figure, now in Munich, the resemblance to early portraits is striking. In the centre of the group, with her back turned to us, is Urania, the transcendant Muse, and the four girls to the left are Calliope, Cleo, Euterpe and Melpomene, known as the Heroic Muses. The dancing deities would certainly have shocked a dancing master of the old school like Guglielmo or Domenichino, who always insisted that decorum should be observed above all else in the dance, and who stressed so firmly that no steps were to be "lascivious or wanton".

The fact that these dancers are so carelessly disregarding the dancing rules of the day convinces us that this is a mock-heroic theme, perhaps the only one that the serious and sculpturally-minded Mantegna ever painted. However, Mrs. Tietze, who has written a monumental work on the artist, staunchly and puritanically argues that a lewd reading could never be possible in a picture destined for a princess of Isabella's standing. Without involving oneself in the feud, our knowledge of Isabella tells us differently. She was fond of suggestive spectacles, and laughed through many of Ariosto's licentious plays. She even winked at immorality among her own "maids of honour" if it suited her political purpose. That she might have hung such a picture in her study is not incompatable either with her personality or with the easy age in which she lived.

A far more fascinating question is how Mantegna conceived the setting for the picture. For, despite the fact that a dictatorial patron would issue a list of charac-

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DANCING MUSES, *attributed to Mantegna, which is one of the studies connected with the* Parnassus *(on page 12) in the Grahl Collection. This drawing shows not only an understanding of Renaissance dance movement, but a deep knowledge of Roman and Greek sculpture.*

Going Gala

at Golders Green, Streatham Hill and Drury Lane

by PETER WILLIAMS

International Stars of the Dance

Hippodrome, Golders Green (Oct. 16-21), Streatham Hill (Oct. 23-28).

THERE are galas and galas, and some are more gala than others, but in the general run of the dance mill this word is usually attached to an ill-assorted collection of little items which make a sorry contribution to the art of ballet. Those amongst my readers who are regular and/or attentive must by now have a slight inkling of the fact that the "gala" comes pretty high in my short but violent list of pet hates, for I just hate to see fine dancers wasting their talents in such a manner. Then reason, which is equally strong on my other short list of anti-hates, pipes up with, "Yes, but if it weren't for those galas there are a number of dancers you would never see". And reason, of course, is perfectly right.

So taking a deep gulp and swallowing my aversion to such manifestations I will admit, and gladly, that the gala programmes which now seem to be a peculiar feature of the London autumnal ballet scene, have brought us some of the most interesting dancing in a year which has seen some of the finest dancing in almost any year. The first batch of galas took place in Golders Green and Streatham Hill during mid-October, and were organised by that indefatigable gala-ist, Anton Dolin. The list of dancers was impressive (Arova, Algaroff, Bruhn, Charrat, Darsonval, Dolin, Giuliano, Sombert, Renault and Vyroubova), and so was the opening item *(The Pas de Quatre)*; and as the evenings continued the list continued to be imposing though the programme arranging often tended to obscure this fact.

This arranging of programmes is an art in itself, and one that many of us learned some thirty odd years ago in the wonderful revues of Charles B. Cochran. All those who had the honour to work with Cochran will remember how during a try-out run, more often than not in Manchester, nights were spent while the order was rearranged and numbers, if they were not immediately successful, ruthlessly slashed or cut out completely. The same rules of order and balance should go into the production of the dance concert programme, which is after all a form of revue, for the finest dancers in the world go for nothing if a perfect balance in programme planning is not achieved. Of course this is not easy in programmes which have to be put on in a hurry, as were those for the "International Stars of the Ballet" at the aforesaid theatres of the inner suburbs, but had more time been devoted to these preliminaries then I think that the two weeks would have enjoyed a greater success with both audiences and critics.

ARTISTS ARRIVE: At a party given by Anton Dolin at the Arts Educational School to welcome the stars of his concert programmes are: left, Erik Bruhn and, right, Dolin with Lycette Darsonval, former star of the Paris Opéra. Photos: Marion.

VYROUBOVA AND GIULIANO: Two of the "International Stars of the Dance" who appeared in Golders Green and Streatham. They are seen here in the Casse Noisette pas de deux *and they also appeared in* Don Quixote. *Photo: Marion.*

The opening, as I have said, was fine — Dolin's version of *The Pas de Quatre* with Vyroubova (Taglioni), Sombert (Grisi), Charrat (Cerrito) and Arova (Grahn) — and as formidable an array as you are likely to see these days. Sombert, dancing beautifully a most difficult variation, brought little period flavour to Grisi. While Charrat, very conscious of the period flavour needed, rather overdid it in a coyness that seemed unduly forced in her impression of Cerrito. Nor, in this work, did Arova quite get to grips with the Romantic Danish school of Grahn, though later she was to prove that in fact she has a sound knowledge of this particular style. However, in spite of these defects in interpretation, the dancing was of an exceptionally high order. It was, though, only in Vyroubova's Taglioni that both style and technique came together in one person, and what she did was on a level with Markova (the original Taglioni) in both finesse and poise. Both Markova and Vyroubova have become inextricably involved with Sylphides as created by Taglioni — the former in Fokine's ballet and unforgettably in Paris in Bournonville's *La Sylphide*, the latter in Gsovsky's reconstruction for Les Ballets des Champs Elysées — both artists would seem to be wholly right in their respective approaches to the materialisation of sylphs upon the stage.

Two former stars of the Paris Opéra — Lycette Darsonval and Michel Renault — appeared together in an assortment of *pas de deux* through the two programmes. The

first of these was from the last act of the Mérante/Delibes *Sylvia.* If what we saw was the choreography as originally danced by Rita Sangalli, the rôle's creator, with Mérante, the ballet's choreographer, then it was a fascinating museum piece and in its time I can imagine that the choreography was quite sensational. After Sangalli, Darsonval was one of the rôle's most important interpreters, and it is a pity that in England we have not before had the chance of seeing her in the flesh (she has appeared on TV) and surrounded by the company in which she was such a sparkling ornament for so many years. Frankly it is a little hard to pass fair judgment on somebody who is virtually in half-retirement and who is being shown under circumstances far from ideal. We got glimpses of a strong technique, especially in *pirouettes à la seconde,* and of a style that was typical of the Opéra in former years, and all that alone made the occasion interesting for the connoisseur. Michel Renault was the lively and untiring male star of the Opéra when it came to Covent Garden some years ago. While his endearing flashiness now seemed rather muted, his untidiness of finish remains.

Both dancers also appeared in *Tendresse* with choreography by Renault to the Schumann music which Fokine used so exquisitely in a *pas de trois* for Chiarina and two girls in *Le Carnaval.* It was one of those drifty dreamy mood pieces whose main feature appeared to be that Darsonval was carried around in a horizontal recumbent position which recalled an advertisement for mattresses. Their *Grand Pas Espagnol* to Minkus music and, apparently, Petipa choreography, was notable for its musical instrument introductions — an imaginary mandolin played seriously by him and plucked playfully by her and a far from imaginary tamborine banged by both of them. And if this was typical of the Petipa choreography we know less well, then I can understand why we only see the few full-length works of his that are in most Western repertoires. A solo for and by Renault, *Prayer,* to the whole of the second movement of Beethoven's *Seventh Symphony,* contained so much extraordinary posturing and "floor" work that it was not repeated after the Golders Green opening — some prayers should *not* be answered.

Claire Sombert appeared in one solo and also in a number of *pas de deux* with Youly Algaroff. She is a dancer who, through the years, has matured gradually and surely. What of course she needs is a company in which she can perform both classics and contemporary works in order to display her considerable range. She has the most beautiful line and the sort of technique, rare in French dancers, which is not used flashily. This was best shown in her solo, *Prélude,* to Bach music and choreography by Charrat. An effective piece of work and an admirable solo for concert performances. In three other *pas de deux* — a ludicrous ballet version of the scene in Lisa's room from Tchaikovsky's *La Dame de Pique* dreamed up insensitively by Lifar, in a meaningless number based on de Musset's "*. . . Et Me Donne un Baiser*" by Françoise Adret to more Tchaikovsky music, and in Dirk Saunders' *L'Emprise,* which I did not see this time but have seen and reviewed favourably in the past — in all these the particular qualities Sombert possesses shone through. Algaroff, as always, presents a Romantic appearance on stage even if he had little to dance.

Nina Vyroubova, former star of the Ballets des Champs-Elysées, the Paris Opéra and the de Cuevas company, is always a welcome visitor to England. She has the broad sweep and grandeur of the Russian school plus certain other qualities that are the best part of the present French teaching. It is always a joy to see her stylish interpretation of anything even if, as on this occasion, she seemed hardly at home with either the stage or the orchestra, which, under Geoffrey Corbett's baton, seemed intent on making a pretty good hash of everything. As well as her aforementioned Taglioni, she appeared with Dolin as a partner in Lifar's *pas de deux* created in the 'thirties for the film, *La Mort du Cygne.* A trumped-up piece of work even in those days, it seems even worse now taken out of context and when shown alongside excerpts from acknowledged masters such as Petipa and Bournonville. Partnered by a strong and virile artist, Juan Giuliano, she also showed up in *pas de deux* from *Casse Noisette* and *Don Quixote.* In both she was less than her best as I know it to be, and in the former she had an unbecoming costume, though she still provided a very proper lesson in the grand manner.

Nor was Charrat shown at her best. The long excerpt from her *Héracles* when she appears as a Deer with Giuliano as Hercules, loses its point away from the ballet. Her clean rhythmic line would have been better displayed had she revived her excellent version of *Grieg Concerto.* And if she should no more dance Fokine's *Le Cygne* than should any other ballerina, at least she *danced* every step and her arms flowed and rippled like the river upon which the bird is supposed to be dying. Her acting ability brought back some feeling of that sublime dancer who danced this rôle, and the one with which she is linked for all eternity, for the last time in England on this particular stage in Golders Green.

Two solos from Dolin — *Bolero* and *Le Roi Soleil* — and I find it a great tragedy that such a fine and important artist should only be known to the present genera-

JANINE CHARRAT (top left) in the Fokine solo, Le Cygne, *which was one of the several items in which she appeared.*

SONIA AROVA (below left) in a solo from Flower Festival in Genzano *which she danced with Erik Bruhn as well as the* pas de deux *from* Don Quixote. *Photos: Marion.*

KARSAVINA REHEARSES "SPECTRE": Tamara Karsavina, who created the rôle of the Girl in Fokine's Le Spectre de la Rose, *is seen rehearsing Margot Fonteyn and John Gilpin for the R.A.D. Matinée at Drury Lane.*
Photos: Left, by Zoë Dominic. Right, by Anthony Crickmay.

tion by dances of such utter banality and mediocrity. If *Bolero* is no more Spanish than is the music of French composer Maurice Ravel, neither does Jack Carter's *Le Roi Soleil* give any feeling of the style of the French 17th-century court even if Norman McDowell's gold and befeathered costume is a moderately correct evocation of what the Sun King wore at Court masques, apart from the lack of a sleeve on one arm.

Two items from the students of Grace Cone's Arts Educational School — *Rendezvous* (Wolff-Ferrari music and Peter Wright choreography) and *Masquerade* (Tchaikovsky music and Grace Cone choreography) — very nicely and cleanly danced and with two boys, Nicholas Chagrin and Alain Dubreuil, who should go far.

Whatever the merits and demerits of these programmes the appearance of Erik Bruhn with Sonia Arova, for the first time in England together since the days of Metropolitan Ballet way back in the late 'forties, made everything worthwhile. They appeared in the *Don Quixote pas de deux* and in *The Flower Festival in Genzano*. In my opinion Bruhn is the most cleanly classical dancer in the world today. He has a beauty of line and a perfection of finish to his every movement that I have not seen equalled in any male dancer since the war. Clearly this comes from his training in the Bournonville school of the Royal Danish Ballet. But his years of working with other companies away from home have given him greater freedom and a warmth which makes his dancing more of a spectacle than just an immaculate display of the classical vocabulary. It says a lot for the honesty of his work that although he has spent many years as guest artist with companies and in concert performances he has never succumbed to the temptation of becoming flashy or trying to stun an audience with pyrotechnics. He lets the dance speak for itself without any embellishments and in this respect he is a model which every male dancer around should strive to emulate. In *Don Quixote* this particular quality was very noticeable, as also it was in the Bournonville *pas de deux*, though oddly enough he was less effective in this than was Flemming Flindt, who gave it recently with Festival Ballet. Nonetheless both his appearances provided that particular joy in watching great dancing, which is what keeps us jaded critics on our toes and revives our frequently flagging enthusiasm.

Sonia Arova was always a strong dancer and during her time with Festival Ballet she was tending to become a flashy technician. Now that seems to be in the past and she has fined down to an artist of extremely fine calibre. In *Don Quixote* she danced as I feel certain this *pas de deux* was intended to be danced, or certainly as I remember Markova used to dance it — that is with gaiety but entirely without chi-chi and with no striving to ruin the flow of the choreography in spectacular holding of *équilibre* and all those circus tricks which tend to make it so nauseating. Arova timed everything to a nicety and thus earned our undying gratitude. She also showed a firm grasp of the Bournonville school, doubtless aided by Bruhn's coaching, in the *Flower Festival* number. Obviously she had not the time to assimilate all the features of this school but she gave a very acceptable impression flavoured with some of the spice of the Russian school in which she was brought up. Nothing wrong in this provided it is done with taste and at the right moments, and in her case it was.

It was good for us all to see both these artists dancing again in England, and it would be good for us, and possibly even for them, if we could see them here more often and in ballets rather than concert performances.

The R.A.D. Matinee

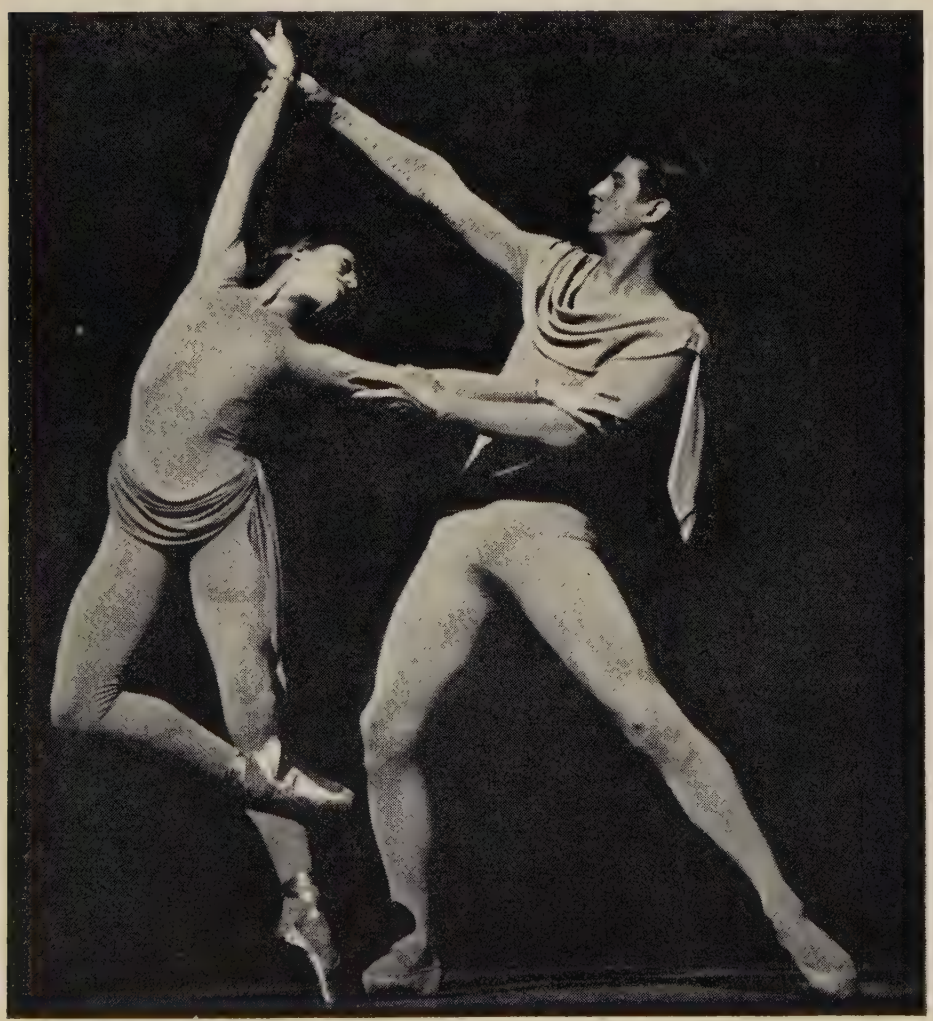
at The Theatre Royal, Drury Lane (Nov. 2).

ALL my purely personal feelings about the nature of galas break down when faced annually by the matinée which Dame Margot Fonteyn organises to raise funds for the Royal Academy of Dancing. By sheer hard work and organising ability she manages to collect and present, with a professional touch which makes all other such organisers look like a bunch of amateurs, most of the dancers we really want to see. So it was that for her matinée at Drury Lane on November 2 she managed to enlist the services of Rudolf Nureyev, and England had its first glimpse of the most talked-of dancer in 1961. Without disrespect to any of the other artists I will talk about him first.

Asked about him a few nights later at the Pushkin Club, Marie Rambert said that Nureyev was the dancer that came the nearest to Nijinsky. She should know as she worked closely with Nijinsky, and apart from Tamara Karsavina there are few people alive who had a greater chance of knowing him more intimately from a professional point of view.

Never would I question Rambert's assessment of a dancer, and I implicitly believe that she may be right. In this year of grace we have seen some magnificent male dancers, but none has shown, as has Nureyev, that sort of tragic quality that

VISITORS FROM DENMARK (left): Two young members of the Royal Danish Ballet — Niels Kehlet and Solveig Oestergaard — in the Flower Festival at Genzano pas de deux.
Photo : Anthony Crickmay.



VISITORS FROM FRANCE (left): Claire Sombert with Gerard Ohn in his Adage, *to Albinoni music.*
Photo : Anthony Crickmay.

is as though a flame were burning him up inside. In only one other dancer since the war have I seen this same dynamic personality — in Jean Babilée, who, oddly enough, bears a remarkable resemblance to Nureyev. There is the same untidy shock of hair, the same chisled features and the same vulpine expression which occasionally lights up in an engaging and unforced smile, the same feeling that he is dancing for himself while we the audience are peeping through a keyhole on some private ritual. There is also a similarity in the tempered muscles which are nowhere over-developed. I would think also that Nureyev resembled Babilée in that his performances at their best can be sublime, rare occasions which send you reeling from the theatre; at their worst they can be very bad. This blowing hot or cold is present in the architecture of every genius in any one of the arts, and genius (that dangerous, dangerous word) is hovering around this young Russian just waiting to alight.

Although the occasion at Drury Lane was the right one for Nureyev's London début, the audience was not — too hysterical upstairs and too apathetic and uncomprehending downstairs. Nor frankly do I think that we saw him at anything like his best — in a fiendishly difficult solo, *Poème Tragique* (Scriabin music), cooked up by Frederick Ashton, and in the *Black Swan pas de deux* (replacing at the last moment the one from *Don Quixote* announced on the programme, never corrected and thus misleading the "downstairs" audience, who had no idea anyway) which he danced with Rosella Hightower. The solo was very "devised" and one of those spurious sentimental numbers which I had hoped could never be laid at the door of any Western choreographer, not helped either by a ludicrous costume of bare torso bound around with red and white ribbons. The *Black Swan* was a battle of loyalties — an audience feeling it had gone too far in forcing Nureyev to repeat his solo, applauded wildly when Rosella Hightower came on for her solo, though there seemed to be less when she finished it. In all this, Nureyev showed a number of technical faults — such as landing badly and a tendency to go over on one side in his *tours en l'air* — which unfortunately some critics have been only too eager to pounce on at the expense of everything else. Apart from anything else some leeway should have been allowed, owing to the ordeal through which he must have been passing, to the fact that he appeared to be having difficulty with the size of the stage and to the orchestra, which was of little help to anyone. All this should have been taken into consideration when judging one who is undoubtedly one of the great figures of the dance in our time. It is obvious that he needs the discipline of a company such as can only be realised in the great State organisations of the world, yet somehow I think it would be a tragedy if this individual and, in retrospect, haunting figure were forced to conform to any sort of "establishment" practices. Ballet desperately needs individualists, and what is more it can

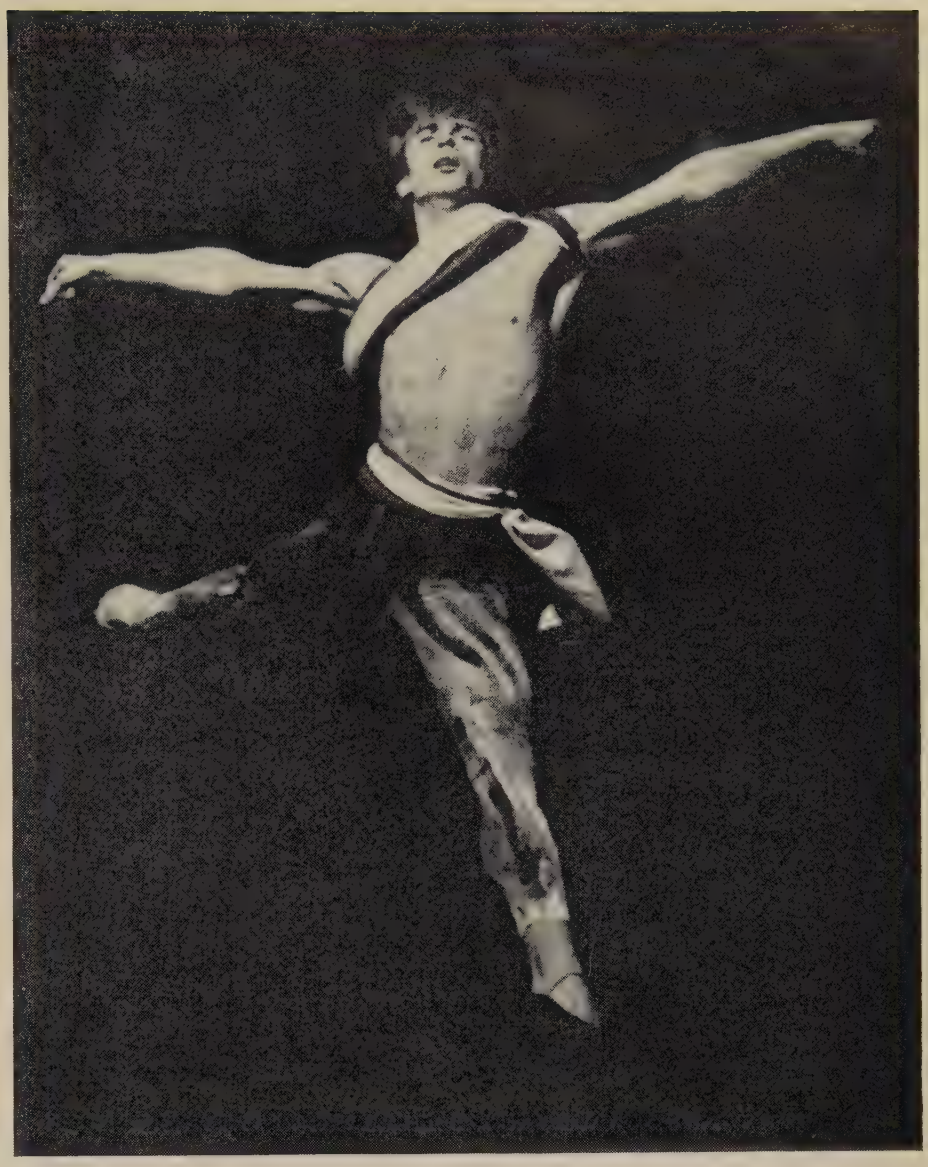
now afford them; whether Nureyev himself can afford it is questionable, but it should be the crusade of every ballet director, even remotely worth his salt, to see that he can. But woe betide anyone who tries to exploit him owing to the publicity of the "Paris incident": they will be hounded mercilessly by us, and anyway Nureyev's art far transcends any such paltry considerations.

Although the presence of Nureyev unquestionably overshadowed all else at this memorable matinée, it would have been far less memorable if the rest of the programme had not been of such excellence. Starting off with one of those items which Meriel Evans concocts annually to display the scholars of the R.A.D. — this time *Make-Believe,* set in a day nursery to Burrill Phillips' music and given with the accustomed polish that can only be found in dedicated youngsters — the programme moved on to the first batch of visiting Danes.

Since we in England appear to be denied further visits of the entire Royal Danish Ballet, it was a wholly admirable idea to show us some of the young entry of whom we were not conscious (possibly they weren't born!) when the company came to Covent Garden nearly a decade ago. Solveig Oestergaard and Niels Kehlet, giving the now much-seen Bournonville *Flower Festival in Genzano pas de deux* (did Bournonville create *no* other dances for two people?), were a most engaging couple. They have youth and freshness and complete awareness of their treasured school. He has *ballon* and at the moment more verve, energy and enthusiasm than finesse, also something of what Flemming Flindt used to have before he fined down. She is a delicious dancer and a most strong and precise technician whom I would love to see in one of the full-length Bournonville works, or as Swanilda in the Danish *Coppélia.* Later both they and six others appeared in the *Pas de Six* and *Tarantella* from the last act of *Napoli.* It is one of the special joys of ballet to see this school, and even if the particular refinements, which only come with years of experience, still escape these young dancers, it was heartening to know that the new generation can still respect its heritage. Their particular charm sweeps through ballet like an invigorating breeze, sweeping away at the same time some of the cobwebs that tend to clog us up. They also remind us that ballet is primarily—dance.

Claire Sombert, a fugitive from the aforementioned performances in the inner suburbs, appeared in a *pas de deux* with and by Gerard Ohn. Making the necessary balance in the programme, this dance *Adage,* to Albinoni (one of the year's most popular composers for *pas de deux)* music also stood upon its own four feet and in its own right. I believe it is Ohn's first excursion into choreography and it showed that he has a sound musical sense and an interesting feeling for movement even if a moment when he supports her, back to back, with her legs up in the air, could well have been dispensed with. Both dancers performed with a beauty of line and a controlled elegance.

The Royal Academy's president, Dame Margot Fonteyn, appeared in two numbers — with Michael Somes in the *Birthday Offering pas de deux,* which at the last



LONDON'S FIRST SIGHT OF NUREYEV: Rudolf Nureyev in Ashton's Poème Tragique, *to Scriabin music, created specially for the R.A.D. Matinée. Photos: Above right, by Anthony Crickmay. Below right, by Marion.*

THE BLACK SWAN PAS DE DEUX : *Rudolf Nureyev with Rosella Hightower in the* pas de deux *which replaced the advertised* Don Quixote.
Photos : Above, by Felix Fonteyn. Below, by Anthony Crickmay.

moment replaced the absent Poles, and with John Gilpin in a revival of Fokine's *Le Spectre de la Rose*. For the latter she enlisted the help of Tamara Karsavina, who created the part of the sentimental girl returning to her bedroom after her first ball. With such help from Karsavina, added to Fonteyn's own and unique artistry, this little poem of Vaudoyer regains its poetry and, theatrically speaking, it regains its balance. Too often have we seen this work cut down musically and used more as a solo for the boy, with the girl as little more than a piece of furniture. Now the girl has regained her rightful position. Fonteyn's face is most expressive and you can see her reliving in her mind the excitement of her first grown-up dance. As she unties her bonnet, her hand accidentally touches the rose on her bodice — memories become stronger as she sinks back in her chair to sleep and to dream. After the entrance of the rose's spirit she moves, still in a dream. Her awakening is never complete until after the spirit has flown through the window. In these final moments, when she is uncertain as to whether the whole episode was reality or imagination, Fonteyn touched magic, and probably evoked Karsavina more than anyone has since.

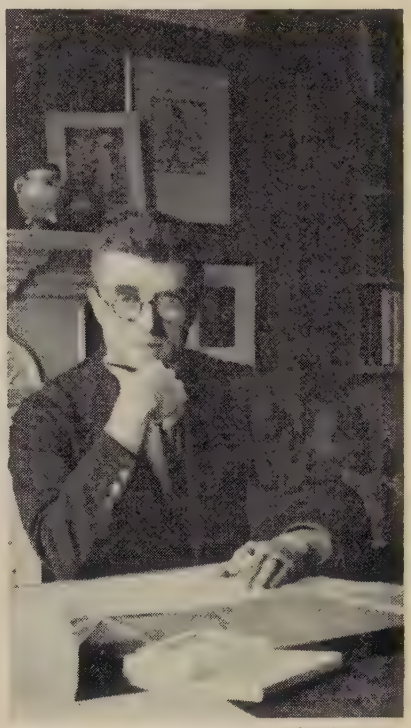
Although Gilpin danced very well, I think that I have seen him dance the rôle of the Rose better. I think also that with more practice both of them could make this revival something very real and not just a nostalgic shadow of past glories living on in the fading memories of those who originally saw Karsavina dance with Nijinsky. I think such a revival is worth very serious consideration, and it would be sad if it were allowed to die on the stage of Drury Lane after a single performance in the afternoon.

I have noticed in the past that "things" tend to happen as a result of these matinées. The "things" that could happen as a result of this one would be — Nureyev and Sombert dancing in this country more permanently. *Le Spectre de la Rose* returning to the Royal Ballet's repertory, the return of the Royal Danish Ballet. Should all these things happen then I shall never have anything rude to say about galas — any more.

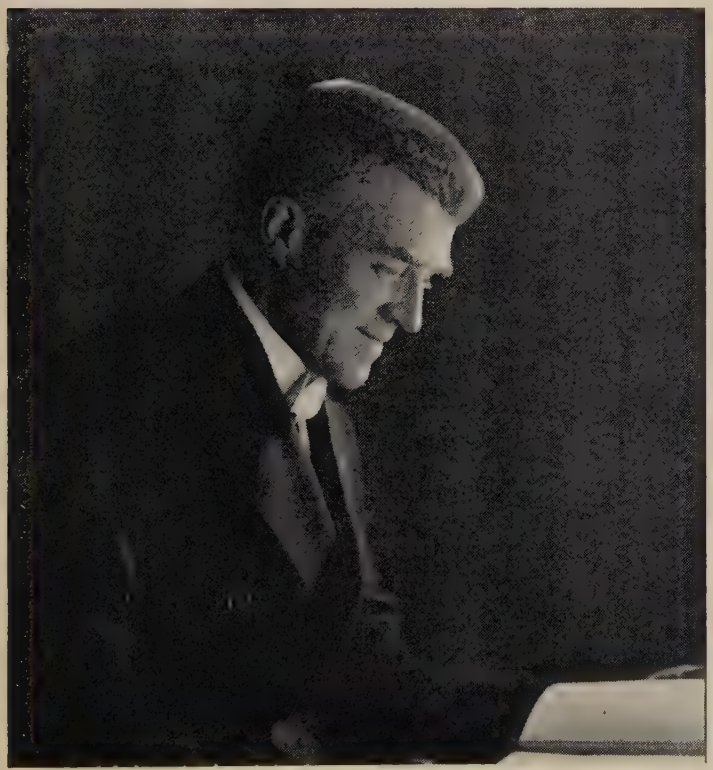
Cyril W. Beaumont

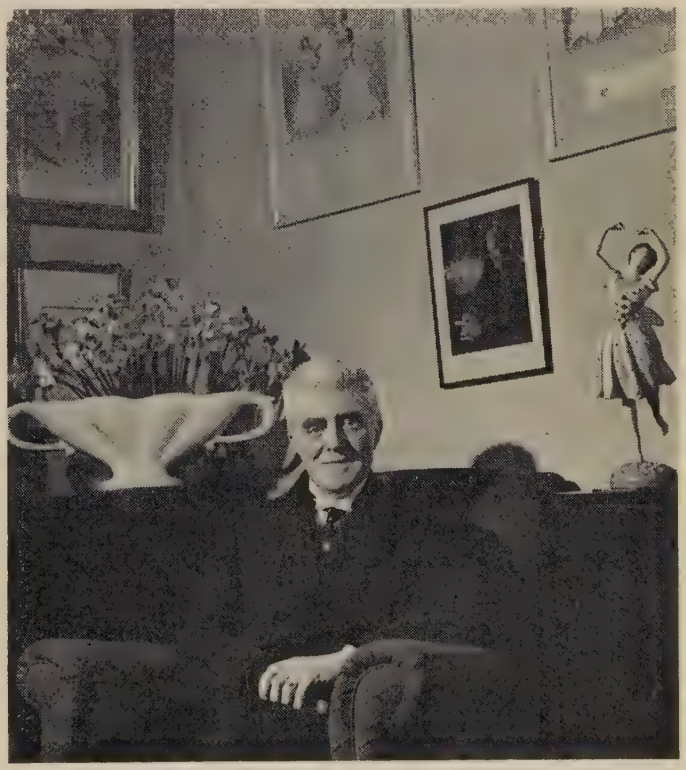
70th ANNIVERSARY SUPPLEMENT

On November 1, 1961, Cyril W. Beaumont celebrated his 70th birthday. For the greater part of these years he has devoted his life to the service of ballet — as historian, as critic, as recorder, as publisher and in an enormous number of capacities as advisor and friend of student and star alike. On this and the next six pages, we attempt to give you some idea of the extent of his immense work.



THROUGH THE YEARS: The picture above left is the earliest known photograph of Cyril Beaumont. As a young man he is seen in the picture, above centre, taken in his twenties and at the time when he was writing about the Diaghilev Ballet. In the 'thirties is the picture above right, and when Beaumont was working on his Complete Book of Ballets, *manuscript pages of which can be seen lying around. The Eliot and Fry portrait, below left, was taken during the 'forties. Below right is a recent picture, by Paul Wilson, of Beaumont at home in his Bloomsbury flat. His beautiful statuette of Emma Livry can be seen on the right while on the walls are many valuable prints of the Romantic ballerinas.*





IN HIS HONOUR: Beaumont with Christmas Humphreys and Molly Lake at a performance given by the Ballet Guild at the People's Palace on March 22, 1944.

CECCHETTI SOCIETY: Beaumont with Elsa Marianne Von Rosen and Cecchetti students after their annual display when all who take part are given chocolates with Cecchetti's portrait on the box. Photo: Jack Blake.

PAVLOVA COMM... Doris Barry (Markov... Lucas making final ... rose on the Midnigh... commemorate the 25...

SOME DATES IN BEAUMONT'S LI...

1891: Born, November 1.
1910: Became a bookseller.
1911: First saw Pavlova and Mordk... dance at the Palace Theatre.
1912: First saw Diaghilev's company ... Covent Garden: in *Thamar*, *Les Sy... phides* and *The Firebird*, with Karsavi... Nijinsky, Bolm and Cecchetti.
1913: First translation (*Nijinsky*, ... Miomandre).
1914: Married Alice Mari Beha. First boo... (*Cléopâtre*).
1917: Inaugurated the Beaumont Press.
1921: Ballet critic of *Dancing World* (un... 1924).

From A. V. Coton

WHICH living critic of any art, now in his seventies, has achieved as many books as years — except Cyril Beaumont, researcher, translator, compiler, historian and, outstandingly, the doyen of ballet critics of our time?

The Complete Book of Ballets, and its supplements; the survey of ballet décor through five centuries; the manual of the Cecchetti system; the dozens of accounts of dancers, companies, choreographers; and — not least — translations of such balletic giants as Arbeau, Noverre and Rameau — these are an achievement such as no other critic of the dance has even aspired to.

He began writing criticism in 1921, and in 1957 became the first ballet critic to achieve the Presidency of The Critics' Circle; between he seems to have spent every waking moment in reading, discussing, studying, translating, and in classroom studies, dance adjudications, advising dancers and directors, and in founding or guiding various bodies devoted to teaching or research, all on behalf of ballet.

My acquaintance with him came many years after I had started reading everything of his that I could find. He was from the start (as has always been reported) kind, courteous, helpful. There was no good reason why he should discuss problems of ballet, ballet-making, ballet-criticism with a stranger; but he did. He indirectly taught me how and why criticism is of value, and this guidance grew slowly through our talks. I felt that our real bond was a common experience of the Diaghilev Ballet (though my enchantment had come years later than his, and I had seen far, far less of the company).

Indirectly, more through suggestions and veiled hints rather than by direct precept, he taught me how to acquire and maintain a sense of balance in these matters. Not to give all enthusiasm to one company, one dancer, one choreographer, one kind of ballet; but to look closely at everything, to see virtue wherever it flourished, to enjoy every morsel that was good in any performance anywhere.

I imagine my belief that he gave me so much of value in the early days of our acquaintance would a little surprise him today.

He was, and is, undemonstrative; his energy and imagination, all his painstaking skill, have been utilised in his work for the past fifty years. Through his organising, guidance, persuasion; his advising, reading, studying; his work as judge and his heavier work as historian and critic, he has taught many of us attached to ballet a good deal of all we know.

The word "loyalty" is, in ballet circles, a heavily overworked one; too often used in the wrong contexts, for the wrong purposes. Cyril Beaumont is, in my estimation, the outstanding example of a person giving total loyalty to the art he loves, and I can think of no instance when he has used his elevated position, his deep knowledge and his trusted status in the ballet world to further any personal end. Everything has been, still is, and — we sincerely hope — will continue to be for a long time an act of service to the art that ensnared his interest as a youth of twenty.

From Peter Williams

ALTHOUGH this year, 1961, marks the fortieth year since I first came to see ballet, it was not until I started to read the books of Cyril Beaumont ("C. W. Beaumont" as he always says when he picks up the telephone) that I really started to "see" ballet. That's to say with eyes that looked deeper than merely absorbing the external details of the spectacle as it was then put on by Diaghilev or Pavlova. As I read these books I came to know something of the hard work and artistry that inevitably goes on behind the performance that is shown upon the stage, and something of the history that over the centuries has determined the shape of ballet as we know it. It was Beaumont who gave me these eyes to see, and so did he give them to almost every person, if they are honest with themselves about it, who writes in English about ballet today. As far as Britain is concerned he was the first, and as a result everyone's job has been lightened because of the monumental work he has done in research and in criticising and recording almost every London ballet performance of importance over the past fifty years.

For many years, though he never knew it, I would think up some excuse to go and browse in his shop — along with many others. His hair, which when I first saw him was carrot-coloured (and which led to the nickname given him by Diaghilev), changed over the years to carrot and salt until today it is pure salt. Eventually I came to know him well, and over Saturday after-

N: Beaumont with l conductor Leighton before the curtain January 23, 1956, to Pavlova's death. Photo: Paul Wilson.

TAGLIONI CAKE: Beaumont with Alicia Markova cutting the first Taglioni cake, a ceremony which he inaugurated, in the Green Room at Covent Garden on June 22, 1957. Photo: G. B. Wilson.

GENERATIONS OF BALLERINAS: Beaumont with Sokolova, Beriosova, Karsavina, Markova and Elvin on the set at the TV studios when all were concerned with a performance of Les Sylphides. *Photo: Paul Wilson*

2: Initiated founding of the Cecchetti ociety.
4: Editor of *Dance Journal.*
6: Presented the Cremorne Ballet.
4: Awarded the *Palmes Academiques,* lso the Gold Medal of Institut Hisorique et Heraldique de France.
8: Awarded Gold Medal of Renaissance rançaise.
4: Member of the Grand Council of the oyal Academy of Dancing.
0: Ballet critic of *The Sunday Times* ntil 1959). Inaugurated the Prix Annual ené Blum.
1: Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur.
8: Chairman of the Imperial Society of eachers of Dancing.

noon tea in his shop, with his wife Alice, and with occasional visits from Lionel Bradley, I learnt most of what I now know about ballet. He never talked "down", never became dictatorial and in a most matter of fact way, and without resorting to the absurd eulogies which now punctuate most ballet talk and writing, would conjure up the wonders of the great period of the Diaghilev ballet and other of this century's important dance manifestations.

Apart from all his other qualities, the one which is most to be prized is his scrupulous fairness. He may know personally many dancers, choreographers and designers, in fact few people can have been the friend of so many dancers both famous and little known, but he has never let this interfere with his true and honest assessment of their work. Today when the general practice is to either laud to the skies or to kill, this fairness, this sense of balance, is something that every one of us who write should strive to emulate. Possibly this leads to less spectacular reading, but it inevitably leads to a more just picture for the present generation and, possibly more important, for the future ones. If Beaumont's only contribution to ballet was through his writings, that would have been a formidable contribution indeed, but his association with many other more practical facets of the dance have made his position unique. In addition to all this he still finds time, heaven alone knows how, to devote to giving generously of his advice and wise counsel to those who honestly seek it.

From Clive Barnes

IT sometimes seems to me that one of the reasons why Cyril Beaumont has achieved so much for ballet is that he was always a ballet critic and never a ballet journalist. Coming myself from a generation that has tended to place at least as much value on how a thing is said as on what was said, a generation that in this process has cultivated ballet journalism at the expense of ballet criticism, and shown an often marked preference for the exhibition of idiosyncratic critical personality, the carefully dispassionate criticism of Beaumont stands both as an inspiration and a rebuke.

Beaumont's critical method is invariable. He himself once clearly defined his terms of reference. "The function of the ballet critic, as I see it, is first to describe a particular ballet and then to discuss its merits and defects, if any, as a complete work of art; this to be followed by a consideration of any individual contributions of importance made by members of the cast." Here, then, is Beaumont's method. In his practice he has set up standards for all of us. His sympathy, wisdom, knowledge, judgment and integrity, his determination to do his job come what may, and his exceptional taste cultivated when modern ballet was passing through the halcyon days of its golden youth, put him apart from the rest of us. Apart, and may I say, above.

His work as a ballet historian is self-evident, and certainly too well known to require any description, and obviously any praise of it would be as impertinent as it would be unnecessary. All I can say is that as a dance journalist I probably plagiarise Beaumont almost every day of my life. I carelessly use facts which he has dredged up by hard labour, and many is the paragraph I must have paraphrased from his research. His facts are not invariably accurate, here and there (and it is only here and there) our Homer nods, but when a man has done so much, so quickly, when one man has built up single-handedly a complete library of dance history, the remarkable thing is that we johnny-come-latelies can only find the odd quibble. Beaumont is the architect of ballet history in Britain, and we should not take too much credit upon ourselves for being able to replace the occasional brick.

As a person Beaumont has influenced three or four generations of ballet workers. Directors, choreographers, dancers, designers, musicians, critics, have all been to Beaumont, listened to his advice, his always generous encouragement, and benefited from his experience.

Although Beaumont has always been a bookseller, as a critic he has never been a salesman. He has never allowed himself to be the mouthpiece of any organisation or indeed any type of ballet. Nor, as a writer, has he sold himself, his foibles or his prejudices. He has remained above ballet politics, and been content to describe, clearly and evocatively, what he saw, what he felt and what he thought. There is a quotation from Anatole France which I know he admires: "Le bon critique est celui qui raconte les aventures de son âme au milieu des chefs d'oeuvre". I salute Cyril Beaumont — le bon critique.

When Cyril Beaumont formed a ballet company

Not much is remembered today of the Cremorne Ballet, which Cyril Beaumont formed in the 'twenties. Although its life was short it in fact preceded the companies that are now an integral part of our national ballet heritage. This story shows how ballet activity was going on in Britain even before any companies became established; it also shows yet another side of Cyril Beaumont's immense activity.

by JOHN PERCIVAL

"PAUSE — and think a score, fifty, a hundred times before you devote yourself to the study of the dance."

So runs the first sentence of the first book of the *Manual of Classical Theatrical Dancing* which Cyril Beaumont wrote, with the aid of Stanislas Idzikowski and Maestro Cecchetti between 1919 and 1922. Yet I doubt whether Beaumont himself ever had time to follow his own advice. The writing of text-books, histories, studies of dancers, ballets and companies, not to mention books on décor, puppetry and a host of other subjects, would have formed a life's work sufficient for most people.

Not so with Beaumont. He found time in addition to print handsome limited editions (did you know, for instance, that he published a book of poems by D. H. Lawrence?), setting up the type himself and designing the layout. He found time to colour, by hand, the plates of some of his books on ballets. All this while running a bookshop, too, and being prepared to accord his customers a leisurely courtesy and attention you will find in few shops today.

On top of this, he must needs try to run a ballet company! The enterprise was mad, quite hopeless: yet a company was formed, and appeared in public, although you will not find much mention of it in the history books.

The story is, perhaps, no more than a digression in the tale of how British ballet started, but it is a digression worth making. The story begins soon after the publication of the *Manual*. In the course of writing this Beaumont had acquired from Idzikowski, and later from Cecchetti, a pretty extensive theoretical knowledge of ballet technique. He also had in mind a number of ideas for different experiments in the making of ballets.

To put these into practice, it seemed worthwhile to try to form a small company. This, you must remember, was at a time when De Valois had presented only a small group of dancers "on the halls" in a series of *divertissements* and Rambert had not even given a pupil show. Beaumont knew that he needed a collaborator with professional experience in choreography and production, and the first person with whom he talked over his ideas was none other than Ninette de Valois.

The intention was to form a small group who could present miniature ballets on the music halls. For setting, Beaumont devised an ingenious scheme for using a few simple pieces (arches, squares and pillars) which fitted together in different patterns like a child's set of bricks.

De Valois, however, was preoccupied with other plans and nothing came of the proposed collaboration. As a souvenir of it, Beaumont still has the costume designs for three dresses to be worn in a *divertissement* based on the idea of different kinds of flame, with his own sketch of a possible setting.

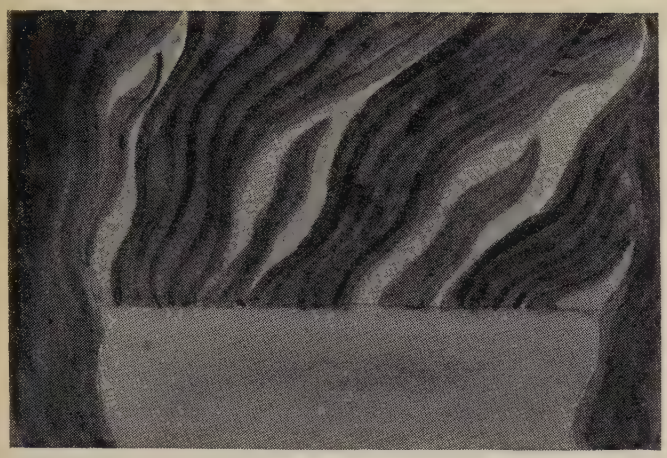
Next, Beaumont started work with Margaret Craske, who had appeared with Diaghilev's company and studied with Cecchetti, becoming an outstanding teacher of his method. She was later joint author with Beaumont of *The Theory and Practice of Allegro in Classical Ballet*. (At a later stage still, she was closely associated with Antony Tudor in the London Ballet, as ballet mistress to the Ballet Theatre, and at the Metropolitan Opera Ballet School.)

This time the venture came closer to being realised. Craske and Beaumont both devised choreography for a number of dances. Beaumont's creations include a grotesque dance to Percy Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey* and a *Buffoon Dance* of some historical interest, being based on one of the plates from Gregario Lambranzi's *New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing*.

Lambranzi was an Italian ballet master who found an ingenious method of recording the character dances he invented. His book (published in Nuremberg in 1716) contains 103 plates drawn by Johann Puschner. Each gives a picture of the costume and setting for one dance, with the dancers in a characteristic pose. At the foot of the page are given the air to which it was performed, a brief account of the theme and some indication of suitable steps. From this, a professional dancer would be able to improvise a complete dance based on the original.

This book, the two parts of which are very rare, was translated by Derra de Moroda and published by Beaumont for the Imperial Society of Teachers of Dancing in 1927. Diaghilev was presented with copies which he promptly passed to his choreographers, some of whom later gave

THE CHRISTMAS TREE: *Design by Wyndham Payne for the ballet with choreography and scenario by Cyril Beaumont which was first given by the Cremorne Company at the new Scala Theatre on March 11, 1926. In this ballet Frederick Ashton made his first appearance on stage as a Cruel Old Man.*



BEAUMONT — DESIGNER : Before the project of the Cremorne ballet came to fruition, Beaumont had the idea for a ballet, and this he discussed with Ninette de Valois. Although the idea never materialised, these sketches of his remain. The ballet was to have been a divertissement *based on different kinds of flames. Right is one of the costumes and left the sketch for the setting.*

signs of having studied the volume to good effect. Even before the English edition appeared, however, Beaumont had produced his version of Lambranzi's *Buffoon Dance.*

The Beaucraske Dancers, as they were to be called, rehearsed their repertory and finally thought themselves ready to appear in public. Beaumont secured for them an audition with the theatrical agent who booked Diaghilev's company. Things did not go well, however, and were not much helped when one girl was given a glass of brandy to steady her nerves. She was to play the Bull in a little ballet based on bull-fighting; when she put on the head which formed part of her costume, she became dizzy and could not see, with results better imagined than described.

No engagement followed, and the little group broke up, Beaumont and Craske dividing the costumes between them. Then Beaumont met Flora Fairbairn, at that time running her Mayfair School of Dancing in Westbourne Grove. Fairbairn had already produced various dances for her pupils, and between them she and Beaumont eventually prepared a full programme, mainly of new works.

Thus was born the Cremorne Company, so named after one of the former pleasure gardens of London. They made their bow at a Grand Matinée of ballets, *divertissements* and song scenas at the new Scala Theatre on March 11, 1926. Among those taking part, in addition to Fairbairn's pupils, were Penelope Spencer, already an established recital dancer and choreographer; Stanley Judson, who was to join Pavlova's company the following year, and later became one of the Vic-Wells Ballet's leading dancers; and a young student at the Rambert School, named on the programme as Fred Ashton.

This was three months before *A Tragedy of Fashion,* in which Ashton is usually said to have made his début, so it seems that the record needs correcting on this point at least. Unless anyone can produce evidence of an even earlier engagement, then Frederick Ashton's first appearance on stage was as a Cruel Old Man in *The Christmas Tree,* a ballet with plot and choreography by Cyril Beaumont.

This was one of the two most ambitious works on the programme, both of which were by Beaumont. *The Christmas Tree* was based on Hans Andersen's story of *The Little Match Girl,* but set in a London

BEAUMONT — CHOREOGRAPHER : As well as writing and publishing, Beaumont also tried his hand at choreography. Below are two dancers in soli *that he arranged. Left is Audrey Ashby in his solo,* Lady Into Cat. *Right is Phyllis Fildes in his* Primavera, *suggested by Botticelli pictures and to Daquin music, which was part of a* divertissement *in the Cremorne Ballet's programme.*

square in 1840. In Beaumont's original scenario, the plot followed Andersen by ending with the girl's death, but as produced it had a happy ending with the poor girl discovered and revived by two young men returning late at night from a party, taken into the house in the window of which she had glimpsed the Christmas tree, and welcomed by its owner to share his fireside and good cheer.

The novelty of Beaumont's conception lay in a kind of *divertissement* performed by the visions appearing to the child as she lit matches to warm her frozen fingers. They represented first the toys she had seen on the tree: a fairy doll, a humming top and various other dolls; then, as hunger and cold took effect on her, "the extraordinary spectacles of a Nut pursued by a terrifying pair of Nutcrackers, and a Sprig of Holly competing with a Sprig of Mistletoe to gain the affection of a Christmas Cracker."

The ballet had music specially composed by Fred Adlington and an attractive setting by Wyndham Payne. The same artists collaborated with Beaumont in *Circus*, a burlesque ballet in three scenes, set on Hampstead Heath in 1890. The circus is a theme which has attracted many choreographers (Christensen, Gore, Lifar and Petit are some who spring at once to mind). Beaumont's version had a trained dog and a group of dervish dancers (led by Ashton) as well as the more usual clowns, ringmaster, tightrope walkers and equestrienne. The last-named was the star, and Beaumont tried to produce an illusion that she had actually jumped through the paper hoops held by the clowns.

Other works by Beaumont on this programme included *Primavera*, a solo for Phyllis Fildes suggested by Botticelli's picture, to 18th century music by Daquin, and the *Buffoon Dance* performed by Penelope Spencer and Betty Scorer — the latter being better known today as Elizabeth Frank, author and ballet critic.

Flora Fairbairn produced a number of works, mainly short, including the *Russian Finale* to pieces by Brahms and Tschernisky. There was a *Bacchanale* (arranged by Daphne Jay to music by Landon Ronald), and Penelope Spencer danced her own very popular *Petite March Funèbre pour une Tante à Heritage*, a witty solo in which, with the aid of a grotesque mask, an enormous black-bordered handkerchief and a fanciful costume, she contrived to suggest the pretended grief of the rich aunt's heir.

To say that the matinée was an overwhelming success would be untrue. The final arrangements were completed in great haste, and Beaumont still remembers the embarrassment when, after a hard morning's work, having sent out for a ham sandwich, he walked through the pass door into the auditorium taking a bite and was surprised to find people there. Only gradually did it dawn on him that they were the audience.

Nevertheless, the performance led to an offer for the company to give *Circus* as a stage show between films at a big cinema in Croydon, but the financial terms proposed made it impossible to accept.

Some of the numbers from the Cremorne repertory were repeated later in the year in four programmes of *Danse-Divertissements* given in the Duke's Rehearsal Theatre of the Royal Academy of Music. This time the company was announced as "The Mayfair Company of English Dancers (First Soloist — Phyllis Stickland) supported by Frederick Ashton and Harry Webster; and Members of the Cremorne Company; and Members of the R.A.M. Operatic Ballet Class". On this occasion, Beaumont himself appeared as the Ringmaster in *Circus* and as the Lady Killer in his own *Bal Mabille*, a "picture of Paris nightlife in the eighteen-sixties".

Further activity was ruled out by the fact that, with no possibility of continuous engagements, the dancers naturally accepted work elsewhere. As each left, further rehearsals were needed to train her substitute, and the rest of the cast grew bored at the constant repetition without even the consolation of a monetary reward.

This was not, however, Beaumont's last practical experience of ballet-making. Some little while later he created a solo for Audrey Ashby, one of Fairbairn's star pupils who had been a soloist in Boris Romanov's Russian Romantic Theatre Ballet. Called *Lady into Cat*, this solo made use of characteristically feline arm movements and was included in an Imperial Society performance. Plans for other works stimulated by the co-operation of this accomplished dancer were cut short when she married and emigrated to Rhodesia.

Beaumont himself claims no great importance or artistic merit for these ventures. They cost him a good deal of money and a great amount of work, but he learned a lot from them. Apart from any other consideration, he has never been likely to fall into the error about which one of our most distinguished dancers once remarked to me: "People don't realise how hard it is to create even a bad ballet."

The main significance of the whole enterprise, I think, is that it was one of many early attempts to form a British ballet company. Because the companies founded by Rambert and De Valois successfully established themselves, we tend to think of them as the pioneers. So they were, but they were not alone.

For many years small groups of people, all filled with the same ideal, struggled in their various ways to put down roots for ballet as a native art in this country. Some had little talent, others much; for some there was never any real chance of success; others, with better luck, might have been remembered who are now forgotten.

Collectively, their vain efforts served a purpose, for as Beaumont himself once wrote, "most successes are the result of lessons learned from the efforts and mistakes of others".

Had the Cremorne Company been able to continue, it is even possible that one of their future productions might have been of considerable historical interest. For one of the young dancers suggested to Beaumont that they should collaborate in trying to revive *La Sylphide*, a work then quite unknown in this country. His name? — of course: Fred Ashton.

BOOKS BY CYRIL BEAUMONT

Books about ballets

Impressions of the Russian Ballet (1914-1921). (1) *Cléopâtre.* (2) *The Good Humoured Ladies.* (3) *Carnaval.* (4) *Schéhérazade.* (5) *Petrouchka.* (6) *La Boutique Fantasque.* (7) *L'Oiseau de Feu.* (8) *Children's Tales.* (9) *The Three-Cornered Hat.* (10) *Thamar.* (11, 12) *The Sleeping Princess,* Parts I and II.

The Complete Book of Ballets 1937. (This was translated into Portuguese—Rio de Janeiro, 1953). *Supplement to the Complete Book of Ballets* (1942). *The Ballet called* Giselle (1944). *The Sadler's Wells Ballet* (accounts of works in the repertory —1946). *The Sleeping Beauty* (text by Beaumont, photographs by Mandinian—a record of the Royal Ballet production, 1946). *The Swan Lake* (text by Beaumont, photographs by Tunbridge-Sedgwick). *The Ballet called* Swan Lake (1952). *Ballets of Today* (1954). *Ballets Past and Present* (1955).

Books about dancers

The Art of Lydia Lopokova (1920). *The Art of Lubov Tchernicheva* (1921). *The Art of Stanislas Idzikowski* (1926). *Serge Lifar* (1928). *Anna Pavlova* (1932). *Vaslav Nijinsky* (1932). *Alicia Markova* (1935). *Margot Fonteyn* (1948). *Antonio* (1952).

Books on technique

A Manual of the Theory and Practice of Classical Theatrical Dancing, Cecchetti Method (with Stanislas Idzikowski, 1922). *The Theory and Practice of Allegro in Classical Ballet,* Cecchetti Method (with Margaret Craske, 1930). *A Primer of Classical Ballet for Children,* Cecchetti Method (1933). *A Second Primer of Classical Ballet for Children* (1935). *A Third Primer of Classical Ballet* (1941).

Children's books

The Mysterious Toyshop (1924). *The Strange Adventures of a Toy Soldier* (1926). *The Wonderful Journey* (1927). *Sea Magic* (1928). *Toys* (1930).

Exotic dancing

A Burmese Pwè at Wembley (1925).

History

The History of Harlequin (1926). *A History of Ballet in Russia,* 1613-1881 (1930). *Fanny Elssler* (1931). *A Short History of Ballet* (1933 — translated into Spanish, Buenos Aires, 1949). *Three French Dancers of the 18th Century* (1934). *Three French Dancers of the 19th Century* (1935). *The Romantic Ballet in Lithographs of the Time* (with Sacheverell Sitwell—1938).

Printing

The First Score: An Account of the Foundation and Development of the Beaumont Press and its first Twenty Publications 1927.

(This Press was founded to publish fine editions of works by distinguished contemporary authors, a form of presentation formerly restricted in the main to classics of literature.)

Memoirs and critical studies

Enrico Cecchetti: a Memoir (1929). *Serge Diaghilev* (1933). *Michel Fokine and his Ballets* (1935).

Reference books

A Bibliography of Dancing (1929). *A French-English Dictionary of Technical Dance Terms* (1931).

Anthology

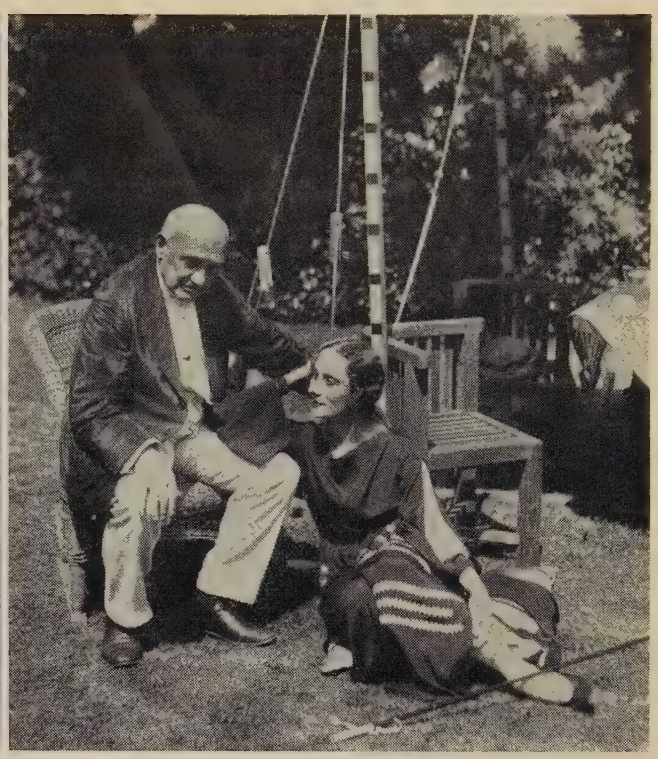
A Miscellany for Dancers (1934).

Books about ballet companies

The Monte Carlo Russian Ballet (1934). *The Vic-Wells Ballet* (1935). *The Diaghilev Ballet in London* (1940).

Ballet design

Design for the Ballet (1937). *Five Centuries of Ballet Design* (1939). *Ballet Design Past and Present* (combines the two earlier books, with additional material—1946). *Leslie Hurry:* Settings and Costumes for Sadler's Wells Ballets (1946).



IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN BEAUMONT'S LIFE: Left is that magnificent character dancer, Adolf Bolm, who was the first dancer that Cyril Beaumont got to know well and with whom he discussed many aspects of ballet. Right are Enrico Cecchetti and Anna Pavlova sitting in the garden of the latter's house, Ivy Lodge. Pavlova was the first Russian ballerina that Beaumont ever saw on the stage, at the Palace Theatre in 1911, and that visit changed the whole course of his life. Cecchetti, great teacher and dancer, also became a close friend of Beaumont when he decided to perpetuate the Maestro's famous system of teaching.

Puppetry

Puppets and the Puppet Stage (1938). *Puppets and Puppetry* (includes some material from the earlier book—1958).

Childhood Memories

Flashback: Memories of my Youth.

Collected criticisms

Dancers Under My Lens (1949).

Translations from the French

Vaslav Nijinsky, by Francis de Miomandre (1913). *The Birth, Life and Death of Scaramouch,* by Angelo Constantine (1924). *Orchesography,* by Thoinot Arbeau (1925. This rendering was itself translated into Spanish, Buenos Aires, 1944). *Marie Taglioni,* by André Levinson (1930). *Letters on Dancing and Ballets,* by Jean Georges Noverre (1930). *The Dancing Master,* by Philippe Rameau (1931). *The Romantic Ballet,* as seen by Théophile Gautier (1932). *Ballet Traditional to Modern,* by Serge Lifar (1938). *The Dance,* by Pierre Tugal. (This book was a pictorial survey with text by Tugal. Beaumont was commissioned to translate it, and sent the English text to the Paris number just at the time of the German occupation. Since then, nothing has been heard of the original text or the translation.)

Books edited by Beaumont

New Paths: Verse, Prose, Pictures, 1917-1918 (with M. T. H. Sadler, 1918). *Thamar Karsavina,* by Valerian Svetlov, translated from the Russian by H. de Vere Beauclerk and Nadia Evrenov (1922). *The Continental Method of Scene Painting,* by Vladimir Polunin (1927). *New and Curious School of Theatrical Dancing,* by Gregorio Lambranzi, translated from the German by Derra de Moroda, with preface by Beaumont (1928) *The Csardas and Sor Tanc,* by Derra de Moroda (1929). *Rational Limbering,* by Zelia Raye (1929). *Some Traditional Scottish Dances,* by G. Douglas Taylor (1929). *Some Classical Dances of Japan,* by Rikuhei Umemoto (1933—also Japanese edition, Tokyo, 1935).

ESSAYS, PREFACES AND ARTICLES BY CYRIL BEAUMONT

(The following list represents only a selection of Beaumont's articles and essays.)

Preface to *Vaslav Nijinsky:* An Artistic Interpretation of his work in Black, White and Gold, by Roberto Montenegro *(c.* 1913).

Preface to *Town and Country:* Designs and Decorations by Wyndham Payne (1925).

"Costume for Ballet" in *Robes of Thespis:* Edited for Robert Mason by George Sheringham (1928).

"Three Polish Dancers" in *Ballet—To Poland* (ed. Arnold Haskell, 1940).

"Hugh Stevenson: Theatre Designs" in *Studio* (April, 1944).

"Ballet's Debt to Fairy Tale" (*Ballet,* January, 1947). "La Sylphide, 1832-1947" (*Ballet,* July, 1947). "Auguste Vestris" (*Ballet,* August, 1947). "Horse Ballets" (*Ballet,* October, 1947). "Simon Slingsby" (*Ballet,* November, 1947). "Pushkin and his Influence on Russian Ballet" (*Ballet,* December, 1947/January, 1948).

Preface to *Brief for Ballet* (Kathrine Sorley Walker, 1947). "Cecchetti's Legacy to the Dance in *Ballet Annual* No. 2.

"Antony Tudor: Choreographer" in *British Ballet* (ed. Peter Noble, *c.* 1948). "Gaetano and Auguste Vestris in English Caricature" in *Ballet* (March, 1948).

"Hommage à Jeanmaire" in *Ballet Annual* No. 4. "Some Dancers of the Diaghilev Ballet" in *Ballet and Opera* (September, 1949).

"The Practice of Ballet Criticism" in *Dancers and Critics* (ed. Cyril Swinson, 1950). "Garland for Nijinsky—Artist and Dancer" in *Ballet Annual* No. 5. "The Funeral of Vaslav Nijinsky" in *Ballet Annual* No. 5. "Forty Years' Writing on the Ballet" in *Ballet Annual* No. 6.

Preface to *The Art of the Dance in French Literature,* by Deirdre Priddin (1952). "The Sleeping Beauty on Television" in *Ballet Annual* No. 7. Prefaces to *Some Historical Dances* (1952), *More Historical Dances* (1956) and *Advanced Historical Dances* (1960) by Melusine Wood.

"Margot Fonteyn" in *Ballet Annual* No. 8. "Alicia Markova" in *Ballet Annual* No. 10. Preface to *The Theory and Practice of Advanced Allegro,* by Margaret Craske and Derra de Moroda (1956). "Christian Berard, 1902-1949" in *Studio,* October, 1959.

NEXT MONTH

PERSEPHONE: Reviews and pictures of Frederick Ashton's new work, to Stravinsky music, for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden.

NEW BOOK SUPPLEMENT: Reviews of all the recent new books published about ballet and the dance in general.

CREDITS AND DISCREDITS FOR 1961: A candid summing up of all that was good and not quite so good during the past year.

All the usual features and many new ones concerning ballet at home and abroad.

BACKSTAGE-NEW-YORK: Left, members of the Kirov Ballet at a party given on the stage of the 57th Street Theatre after Ballet Theatre's recent opening night. Left to right: Irina Kolpakova, Inna Zubkovskaya, Nonna Yastrebova, Lupe Serrano and Konstantin Sergeyev. (Photo: Charles Rossi.)
Backstage after the opening of Jerome Robbins's Ballets: U.S.A. in New York came Martha Graham to talk to Robbins himself. (Photo: David Workman.)

curtain up!

Happy 'Royal' Events

THE President of the Royal Ballet and her husband, former ballet photographer Lord Snowdon, have always shown a lively interest in British ballet. In fact few of the general public can have any idea as to just how much time Princess Margaret has spent with the company and school of which she is President — often watching classes and giving frequent parties so that she can get to know the artists. It is therefore a real pleasure to congratulate them on the birth of their first son, who will, I hope, at a later age follow the family interests. The personal interest of the Royal Family in ballet is becoming of increasing importance since, like Jaguar cars, ballet is now one of Britain's most spectacular exports — both diplomatically and from a foreign currency point of view.

By a happy coincidence, Royal Ballet dancer Rosemary Lindsay gave birth to her first child, a daughter, on the same day. Her husband, Covent Garden stage director William Bundy, is also an old friend of Lord Snowdon.

Presumably the two children born on the same day have the same horoscope. Rosemary Lindsay may be surprised to learn that her daughter will do very good service for the nation and the Commonwealth and is likely to take up an official position abroad.

A few days before that, Brenda Taylor and Desmond Doyle, two other members of the Royal Ballet, achieved their first son, thus adding to the formidable list of Royal Ballet children. Possibly the management, when next the Opera House is closed for annual "improvements", should seriously consider turning the subterranean Green Room into a crêche, which would at least give the mothers a chance of continuing with their careers.

On the Road

ENCOURAGING accounts of the business being done on tour in the provinces by our various ballet companies keep filtering in. Dr. Julien Braunsweg tells me that Festival Ballet has been drawing their best provincial houses ever, and it seems that they are not alone in this.

At a recent performance I attended of Ballet Rambert in South London, people were being turned away from the box office as the curtain rose. Walter Gore's new company drew very good houses in Oxford, as I saw for myself, while the Royal Ballet's very long tour has met with equal success, and what is more they have actually dared to introduce a good proportion of modern works into their repertory instead of the old classical standbys.

All this is vitally important because unless enough "Number One" theatres can keep open, it will become impossible to tour ballet except on a very small scale. For years now, people in the provinces have complained about the lack of good ballet. Now it seems that they can have little cause for complaint, and what is more they have shown their appreciation by attending in their thousands.

Still trying

AMID the celebrations of BBC Television's quarter-century, the immense part played by ballet in the programmes from the very earliest days ought not to be forgotten.

Dancers from the Vic-Wells, the Rambert, the Markova-Dolin and the London Ballet were amongst the most regular performers in the pioneering days at "Ally-Pally", as the old Alexandra Palace in North-East London was affectionately called.

In February 1937, when the regular daily transmissions had been going on for only two months, Stephen Thomas (then one of the only four producers, who between them put on two hours' programmes every day) wrote an article for *The Radio Times* about ballet on TV.

He discussed the suitability of dancing for the new medium and also the disadvantages of the small screen which had to be overcome. "So let us go on trying," he wrote, "if only so that when, some months hence, some clever engineers have made coloured-stereoptic-lifesize television, we are ready for them."

Well, we are still trying, and it is perhaps significant that one of the shows given on the week in which Stephen Thomas's article appeared was a revue in which Maude Lloyd (former Rambert dancer and now wife of Nigel Gosling and half of the Sunday *Observer* critic — "Alexander Bland") danced with choreographer and dancer Antony Tudor. The revue was called — *Hooey*.

Royal Ballet on small screen

THAT people are still trying to do something about ballet on TV is made clear by the fact that the Royal Ballet has been signed up with BBC television to give nine ballets in three years. Already the first of these has been shown — Ninette de Valois' *The Rake's Progress* — and was given mainly by members of the Royal Ballet's touring group augmented by stars from Covent Garden such as Brian Shaw, who played the Dancing Master.

At the moment it is not certain just what other ballets are to be televised, but there is a possibility of two and three-act works being shown. In addition to the fact that these broadcasts will bring ballet before an ever-growing ballet public, there is also the added advantage that the performances, owing to the fact that they are filmed, will provide an invaluable record for the future.

More than a microphone

IT is typical of the times in which we live that the main interest in the popular

press about *Perséphone,* which goes on at Covent Garden on December 12, has concentrated on the fact that Svetlana Beriosova will use, for the first time in British ballet, a Japanese microphone. The fact that Britain's greatest choreographer — Frederick Ashton — is creating a work to an important score by the world's greatest composer — Igor Stravinsky — seems to have been ignored. Apart from all this Beriosova has the first long speaking rôle ever given by a ballerina in the Royal Ballet, in fact the only other time that a star dancer had a long speaking rôle was when Robert Helpmann declaimed two passages of Milton in his *Comus,* first given at the New Theatre in 1942. The fact that Beriosova has to dance as well as speak the poetry of André Gide is the reason for her having to use one of those microphones that fasten into the front of the costume and are not connected by wires.

This work, designed by Greek painter Nico Ghika, will use the greater part of the Royal Ballet plus a tenor (André Turp) and a singing chorus in the orchestra pit. It should also amount to a most notable occasion, for it is only companies of this kind, based permanently in large opera houses, who can possibly mount such spectacles.

Red faces

"YOU know that Nureyev and Hightower are going to dance *Black Swan,* even though the programme says *Don Quixote?"* asked a friend at the R.A.D. Drury Lane matinée. "There will not be an announcement — they apparently decided that this audience would never know the difference."

"They" appear to have been right so far as at least one member of the audience was concerned. How interesting that a critic who devoted all but 17 lines of his 95-line review to a discussion of Nureyev should have failed to notice the change!

On one point, however, this reviewer was right: the audience was pretty poor except in quantity. From the gallery, fans screamed for "Rudolf" as if he were a reincarnation of Valentino. In the stalls, people gossiped and asked, "Is that the Russian?" The lady next to me read her programme through most of the items.

Quietly implied comment came from the Royal Opera House where Head Linkman Sergeant Martin found it necessary to be on duty redirecting the old ladies who had instructed their chauffeurs to drive to the wrong theatre.

Perhaps though this audience is improving slightly for at least its female members respected the occasion by making it more possible for other members of the audience to see. The fantastic display of millinery, which in the past has made this the most hard-to-see performance in the world and which has mercilessly been held up to ridicule in these pages, was fantastic only by its absence this year.

Idle gossip?

AROUND ballet, as around all the arts of the theatre, there is continually woven a sturdy thread of gossip. These whisperings in bars and confidences over cocoa, often seem to contain a modicum of truth — sometimes, even, the whole truth.

For the record, and to show that my ear is continually to the ground even though my mouth and pen often refuse to impart what I hear, these are some of the messages that the jungle drums are beating out.

That Erik Bruhn will become a guest star of the Royal Ballet and dance with Nadia Nerina.

That John Gilpin will dance again with the company which brought him international fame — London's Festival Ballet.

That the promised ballet by Kenneth MacMillan for Margot Fonteyn will not take place in the early New Year as announced.

That members of the Bolshoi Ballet from Moscow will tour the English provinces.

That Rudolf Nureyev will dance again within the sound of Bow Bells, if not in Bow Street.

Rumour, gossip? Possibly.

Dolin in the eternal city

A RUMOUR that has become fact even as the above was being written concerns Anton Dolin. It had been thought that his concert group, "International Stars of the Dance," which was shown first in Golders Green and Streatham Hill, would make an extended provincial tour early next year. If it does, then it will be without Dolin because he has left for Rome. In the eternal city he will direct and reorganise the ballet company at the Teatro dell'Opera. It seems likely that he will mount a production of *Giselle, The Pas de Quatre* and *Variations for Four* amongst other things.

Even if he decides to renew his contract beyond the present season, Dolin will be back in England to organise next year's Midlands Festival in Coventry, which has been extended to a fortnight instead of the single week of this year.

Full accounts

THIS year's Arts Council report has little to say about ballet or opera, pointing out that both Covent Garden and Sadler's Wells will be publishing their own detailed annual reports in December.

There is always something of interest, however, in the pages of these publications if you look at them long enough. My favourite entry this year is the item for the sale of lithographs at a price of 2s. 4d. I wonder how many were sold for this sum, and who they were by? To find this transaction meticulously recorded in the midst of expenditure amounting to more than $1\frac{1}{2}$ million pounds indicates a really thorough account of the Council's stewardship.

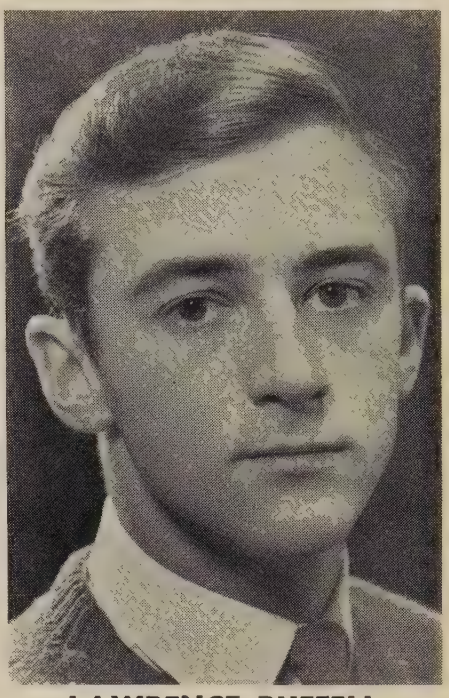
The business of matrimony

THE day following the birth of the "Royal" babies, November 4, two members of London's Festival Ballet got married at Chelsea Register Office. They are principal dancer Belinda Wright and soloist from Yugoslavia, Jelko Yuresha. She was formerly married to another Festival soloist, Wolfgang Brunner, and has one child. Yuresha has been in Festival Ballet for about two years.

happy birthday to...

		December
Lillian Van der Velde	De Cuevas International Ballet	27
Rosemary Toombs	London's Festival Ballet	29
Margaret Dale	Television producer	30
Priscilla Moulds	London's Festival Ballet	30
Beryl Goldwyn		31
		January
Mary Coulson	The London Ballet	1
Anya Linden	The Royal Ballet	3
Ray Barra		3
Génia Melikova	De Cuevas International Ballet	6
Dame Adeline Genée		6
Johaar Mosaval	The Royal Ballet	8
Bronislava Nijinska	Choreographer now in U.S.A.	8
Irina Borowska	Zachary Solov Group	9
Kurt Jooss	Teaching in Germany	12
André Prokovsky	Ballets de Paris	13
Angela Rowe	Ballet Rambert	13
Roland Petit	Ballets de Paris	13
John Kriza	American Ballet Theatre	15
Ivan Dragadze		17
Margaret Mercier	Les Grands Ballets Canadiens	17
Nora Kaye		17
Belinda Wright	London's Festival Ballet	18
Roslyn Curtis	London's Festival Ballet	20

Dancer You Will Know



LAWRENCE RUFFELL

BORN in Wellington, New Zealand, on October 4, 1941. Started to dance at the age of 12 with Jean Valentine in Hastings, New Zealand. Came to England in April, 1957, and studied for a few months with Andrew Hardie. Joined the Royal Ballet School in September, 1957, and the Company two years later.
Creations: Cockerel in La Fille Mal Gardée. *(For Sunday Ballet Club) Clown in* One in Five; *Fool in* A Fool's Tale. *Rôles: Leading and side Ivan in* The Sleeping Beauty; *Neapolitan Dance in* Swan Lake; *Hunting Scene and Pulcinella* Pas de Six *in* Ondine; *Alain in* La Fille Mal Gardée; *Groom in* Petrushka; *Ringmaster* in Ballabile.

NOT only are character dancers rare in British ballet, they are also elusive. In recent years we have lost Basil Thompson, William Wilson and Lambert Cox, to say nothing of that man-of-all-work, Peter Clegg. Among the few remaining, Lawrence Ruffell has during the past year been shooting rapidly to the fore. It seems a fairly safe bet that this young man would have come forward in any event, and it may be Ruffell who will ultimately step into the shoes of his fellow New Zealander, Alexander Grant, when those exceptionally well-filled shoes become vacant, in 1984 or whenever it will be!

Ruffell originally attracted attention in the first performance of *La Fille Mal Gardée,* when he and an attendant harem of chicklets stopped the show almost before it had started. Since then he has built his rôle of the Cockerel into something like a major part, and has now had his reward by being chosen to dance Grant's part of Alain. He has a strong technique, abundant vitality, both of which were shown by his assumption of the Neapolitan Dance in *Swan Lake.* His gift for characterisation has been revealed by the parts he played in Ray Powell's two ballets for Sunday Ballet Club. These two qualities should make a promising Alain, and eventually a brilliant career.

Full-Length Classics

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Tchaikovsky: *Swan Lake,* Op. 20. Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra (Yuri Fayer). MK 202C/1-3. 3 12-in. 123*s*.

Tchaikovsky: *The Nutcracker,* Op. 71. Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra (Gennady Rozhdestvensky). Artia ALP 180-1; S ALPS 180-1. 2 12-in. 82*s*.

DORATI'S complete Mercury recordings of the three Tchaikovsky ballets have performed an invaluable service in introducing us to many unfamiliar passages and, as far as *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* are concerned, showing these scores to be even more masterly achievements than one had though from performances of the cut-down versions employed in theatre productions. In the case of *The Nutcracker,* the Dorati recording has had quite an influence on Western productions, it now being taken for granted that all the music should be used. Even taking into consideration that *The Nutcracker* is a shorter ballet than the other two, it is regrettable that a more enlightened policy of treating the music of *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* in the theatre with the the respect they deserve is still to come.

In Russia, where the true greatness of the composer is understood without any of the condescension affected by many Western critics and "connoisseurs", there has at least been agitation for the numerous cuts to be restored in the major productions. Bourmeister's fuller than usual, though still not complete, version of *Swan Lake* was an important step in the right direction; but as we have seen, the Bolshoi and Kirov productions of *Swan Lake* are musically only slightly fuller than the Royal Ballet's, while the Kirov *Sleeping Beauty* is even more heavily cut than our own.

These two new Bolshoi recordings give the respective ballets absolutely complete. Presumably the Bolshoi *Nutcracker* production uses all the music, but the edition of *Swan Lake* played on the records is a very different matter from the version which Fayer conducted at Covent Garden during the Bolshoi's 1956 season. Not only is every scrap of the music played that is included on the Mercury set, but we are also given in reconstructed form the original "Black Swan" *pas de deux*. This music was not available to Petipa and Ivanov, though it had been included in the 1877 production. It was probably regarded by the ballerina Anna Sobeschanskaya, for whom it was specially composed, as her own personal property, and it was because of this lack that Petipa got Drigo to concoct the familiar Black Swan *pas de deux* from music taken from Act 1, with the addition of an interpolated Tchaikovsky piano piece which Drigo orchestrated.

Only the second variation has survived in its original orchestration. The Intrada, first variation and coda existed only in the form of the usual two-violin transcriptions used for rehearsals, and these have been newly orchestrated by the Soviet composer Shebalin. If not as dramatic as one would have hoped, this music makes fascinating listening, and I hope that we shall one day be given the chance of seeing the *pas de deux* Balanchine has arranged to it.

Fayer's conducting of *Swan Lake* is everything one remembered from his Covent Garden performances, except that the tempi — like Dorati's — are those of the complete Tchaikovsky edition published in Moscow and not those of the Petipa-Ivanov choreography. Passionately lyrical, his reading conveys the symphonic sweep of the music with greater ardour than does Dorati's, even though the Bolshoi Orchestra does not always match the absolute precision of the Minneapolis Orchestra's playing. The Russian recording is warmer in tone if not quite as clear as the more forward and analytical Mercury, and a further point in favour of the new set is that Fayer observes all the marked repeats, whereas Dorati gave us only the written-out ones.

Choice between Dorati's *Nutcracker* and Rozhdestvensky's is not quite so clear-cut. Again the Russian recording is richer and more lifelike, and thus creates more of the atmosphere of a theatre performance. But whereas the Russian conductor is more expansive and more concerned with the dramatic build-up of each act, Dorati shows a more meticulous concern over detail, and this, together with his generally tauter rhythm, provides greater rewards in the long run. Dorati, then, for *The Nutcracker*; Fayer for *Swan Lake*.

Adam by Fistoulari

Adam: *Giselle* (abridged). London Symphony Orchestra (Anatole Fistoulari). Mercury MMA 11141-2; S AMS 16087. 2 12-in. 78*s*.

THE American Mercury company, usually so scrupulous over the editions employed in their ballet recordings, have evidently imagined — so unwisely — the Royal Ballet to be the custodian of an authentic version of *Giselle*. For what we are offered here is the score used in the Royal Ballet's *old* production, the recording having been made before the current one was staged.

How interesting it would have been to have heard, just for once, a performance of the full original *Giselle*. Even a recording of the present Covent Garden version would at least have included several sections omitted from Fayer's HMV account with the Covent Garden Orchestra of the edition used by the Bolshoi, which is nevertheless still a good deal fuller than our own and has the important merit of giving Adam's original orchestration.

As Noël Goodwin pointed out in June when discussing the musical changes in the new Royal Ballet production, Robert Irving and Gordon Jacob were originally responsible for some of the orchestration used by the company, but nobody now remembers who scored the greater part. I have always understood it was Constant Lambert, which seems very likely considering that it was he, in conjunction with Sergueff, who decided on the earlier cuts. Mercury's recording, especially in the stereo edition, is almost embarrassingly clear, for it brings out every detail of this orchestration, which is serviceable enough in the theatre, but when so mercilessly exposed by hi-fi sounds cheap and tinselly compared with the original Adam on the HMV.

There is nevertheless much to be said for the actual performance, Fistoulari striking a sensitive balance between the music's dramatic and more delicate, atmospheric aspects and securing playing of the utmost polish and discipline from the LSO.

Noël Goodwin referred in his review to Roger Fiske's listing, in his book, *Ballet Music,* of the cuts made in the old Covent Garden production. Fiske's bar references tally very closely with certain of the cuts in Fistoulari's performance, but they do not cover all the omissions. This is mainly due to the fact that Fiske's listing, though accurate enough as far as it goes, failed to mention sections always omitted previously at Covent Garden in *La Chasse,* the Galop, the Mad Scene, *Apparition de Giselle,* and the Finale; and also because Fistoulari makes several additional small cuts.

Considering that Fayer's performance (in mono only, incidentally) is still available, it seems pointless to go into greater detail, though it should be said that the Mercury is the most generous selection from the ballet to have appeared in stereo form and that, heavily abridged though this earlier Royal Ballet edition is, it is still fuller

UNINHIBITED abandon of the Volta, one of the Renaissance court dances recorded on the Archive disc reviewed this month, is illustrated in this famous painting, known as "Queen Elizabeth dancing with the Earl of Essex". It is reproduced by kind permission from the collection of the Rt. Hon. Viscount De L'Isle, V.C., G.C.M.G., at Penshurst Place, Kent.

than the Rambert, Festival Ballet and Paris Opéra versions.

One further point about the orchestration of *Giselle*: Henri Busser's edition for the Paris Opéra sticks closely to the original Adam, which suggests that the latter must still have been available in France in 1924 when Busser made his arrangement. This would seem to be confirmed by the interesting fact that the old piano arrangement has a different melody for Albrecht's entrance in Act 2 from that in Adam's orchestral score. If he had worked from the piano score Busser would have come up with that version of the tune (which is heard on the Mercury); but what he gives is the variant contained in the Adam orchestration.

For the LSO's recording, the original orchestration could presumably have been obtained from the Paris Opéra Library. In any case, Mercury could certainly have had it from the Tchaikovsky Foundation in New York.

Prokofiev's Verona

Prokofiev: *Romeo and Juliet*, Op. 64. Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra (Gennady Rozhdestvensky). MK 205C/1-3. 3 12-in. 123*s*.

IT is nearly seven years since Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet* was first heard here in its entirety, when the Zagreb National Opera Ballet danced Margarita Froman's production of the work during their season at the Stoll at the beginning of 1955. However, the musical performance on that occasion, like the production itself, was so poor as to amount to a travesty, and it was not until the Bolshoi came to Covent Garden in the following year that the impressiveness of Prokofiev's achievement was made fully apparent.

After all the tantalising discs we have had to make do with consisting of excerpts from the composer's three concert suites, this first complete recording of the ballet, played with great verve and power by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, seems almost too good to be true. Although its dramatic impact is somewhat lessened when the music is heard in isolation—which is not surprising considering that Prokofiev as an experienced man of the theatre knew all about the subtle inter-relation of music and choreography — there are remarkably few passages where the musical invention fails to sustain interest by itself without the accompanying stage action.

One is more conscious than when watching the ballet of the repetitiveness occasioned by the composer's elaborate use of leit-motifs. Lavrovsky's production had a controversial press in this country. But one thing for which he was not given credit is the way in which his choreography enabled Ulanova and the rest of the cast to convey the passionate romanticism that Prokofiev's essentially extrovert, neo-classical style was ill-suited to express. Without Ulanova, Juliet's music here emerges more skittish than star-crossed, while Romeo is only sketchily characterised by the composer, instead of the music sweeping us along on the tide of his ecstasies and torments, in the way that Tchaikovsky succeeded in doing with Siegfried's emotions in *Swan Lake*.

However, to regret that the one composer who was ideally suited to writing a *Romeo and Juliet* ballet never did so is no cause for underrating the brilliance and theatrical effectiveness of the Prokofiev. The music for the lovers, though insufficiently stirring, nevertheless has an affecting delicacy and poetry, the crowd scenes are vividly alive and the flash of the sword-play is graphically caught in the rushing *moto perpetuo* string-writing. Mercutio is perhaps the character presented with the greatest fidelity to Shakespeare; and in the cortège music following Tybalt's death Prokofiev provided the Lady Capulet with a greater dramatic opportunity than Shakespeare granted to an actress playing the part.

CUSHION DANCE in the first act of Lavrovsky's production of Romeo and Juliet, *as given at the Bolshoi Theatre. The first complete recording of Prokofiev's score, played by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra under Rozhdestvensky, is now available on the MK label.*

The Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra's playing, if not always technically blameless, has all the expressiveness and sharp attack they showed in their accompaniment to the film of the ballet. The tempi, which accord with Lavrovsky's choreography, follow with only a few minor differences the composer's metronome markings as given in the full orchestral score recently published in Moscow. Rozhdestvensky allows us to hear the curious organ solo at the start of the Balcony Scene instead of the optional string scoring that was used at Covent Garden; and the off-stage mandolins asked for in the score for the Aubade in Act 3, scene 3, are not replaced, as usually happens, by plucked strings.

The characteristically Russian vibrato of the brass and woodwind — the dolorous oboes especially — takes a little getting used to, but should deter no one from acquiring the set. The recording, though a little too resonant for perfect clarity, is strong and full.

Renaissance Dances

Praetorius: *Daentze aus "Terpischore"*. Widmann: *Daentze und Galliarden*. Schein: Three suites from *Banchetto Musicale*. Collegium Terpischore. DGG Archive APM 14166; S SAPM 198166. 12-in. 41*s*.

DEUTSCHE GRAMMOPHON'S admirable Archive division does a magnificent job in making available authentic performances of little -known music of earlier periods, always played on the correct instruments for which it was composed. Admittedly such an historical series is designed chiefly to appeal to the scholar and specialist, but when as in the present instance music so utterly captivating is unearthed it seems a pity that the austere packaging and presentation adopted by the company is likely to repel rather than attract the ordinary music lover.

The wording on the sleeve, "Research Period. Period IV: The High Renaissance. Series G: Dance Music," plus the elaborate detail printed on the index card, of source material and the instruments used, hardly prepares one for the uninhibited gaiety and charm of the performance. Of the three sets of dances, all dating from the early 17th century, the finest is the Michael Praetorius, taken from a collection of songs and dances published as *Terpischore Musarum Aoniarum quinta* and described as being written in the style of those "played by French dancing masters in France" and suitable for playing "before the tables of princes for the recreation and delight of the company".

There are five movements: *Entrée* and *Courante, Gavotte, Spagnoletta, Bourrée, Ballet* and *Volta*. The last is the uproarious dance of which Elizabeth I was very fond, in which the ladies were tossed high in the air by their partners, and the example on the record, with the almost savage rhythm wildly beaten out by the drummer, leaves one in no doubt that Renaissance court dances were much more lusty and full-blooded than the stiff formal displays they are usually imagined to have been.

The three suites from Hermann Schein's *Musical Banquet* each consist of a *Pavane, Gagliarde, Courante,* and a linked *Allemande* and *Tripla*. The excerpts from Erasmus Widmann's *Musical Mirror of Virtue* are charmingly titled *Sophia, Anna, Clara, Magdalena, Agatha* and *Regina*. As with the Praetorius, one is reminded of Warlock's *Capriol* Suite, but to hear such music played on the original instruments — recorders, viols, lutes, harpsichord, regal, and a wide variety of percussion including drums, glockenspiel and cymbals — makes modern arrangements seem pallid by comparison.

THE ROYAL BALLET at Covent Garden

Revivals for Fonteyn

ONE of the most heartening features of the autumn season at Covent Garden, apart from the general high standard of the company's dancing, has been the fact that Margot Fonteyn has returned to two Ashton ballets which provided her with her best rôles in the post-war years and before *Ondine* — namely *Symphonic Variations* and *Daphnis and Chloë*.

On October 9, *Symphonics* returned sandwiched between *Antigone* and *The Firebird*. Fonteyn and Brian Shaw are the only two members of the original cast while Anya Linden and Annette Page flank Fonteyn on the female side; David Blair and Graham Usher complete the sextet on the male side.

When *Symphonic Variations* was first given soon after the war it marked something new in British ballet — a pure transmutation of music into dance and given by six principal dancers. Today, when we have seen so many similar types of work from Balanchine and others, the novelty has rather naturally worn off. It remains, however, as a splendid example of choreographic economy, of extreme musicality and of masterly planning and floor patterning. Moreover, it is supremely difficult to dance owing to the fact that there is no possible means of cheating and the spotlight is full glare on all the dancers throughout the entire length of the work. It is very exhausting and this was rather noticeable in some of the dancers on the first night of the present revival.

The main focus, however, is on Fonteyn, partly because she is the one that most of the audience have paid extra money to see but mainly because although she does comparatively the same as the others, she has that quality of being apart while remaining a part of it all. The way she stands, her whole line, the way she places a hand or a foot — all these things are so expressive. And something of her art is reflected in Linden and Page, who doubtless improved as the season went on.

It may seem churlish to Somes to say that I was never so conscious of him until he left, but it is proof, if ever such proof were needed, of the complete rightness of everything he did. David Blair, who now dances the central male rôle, seemed to be no replacement. On this occasion he looked thoroughly ill at ease in a work that needs a sense of relaxation above all else. It must, though, have been a gruelling experience for him, and doubtless with time he will improve. Usher, on the other hand, dancing the third man for the first time, seemed completely at home, and in fact gave more to this particular part than anyone I have seen in it yet. None too easy a feat when he has to match up to Brian Shaw, who seems to be dancing better than ever and seemed fresher than when he first danced in this ballet fifteen years ago.

Until Ashton created *Ondine* for her I used to think that Chloë in *Daphnis and Chloë* was the most moving of Fonteyn's rôles in her contemporary repertory. It is gratifying how this ballet has survived, to me particularly, being the only critic on a national newspaper to adore it from the start. Possibly then people hoped for a more spectacular part for Fonteyn, and I think the very fact that it is unspectacular is what makes it so telling. After all Chloë is a simple country girl who would never indulge in complicated virtuosity, and it says much for Fonteyn's supreme artistry that she has woven a real person out of the very tenuous thread of the story line. In fact today, when her technical powers are obviously not moving up to a peak, she plays the rôle to even greater effect. Her shyness with Daphnis in the beginning, her fear and sorrow at her capture, the depth of her love when she eventually returns to the boy she loves, all these become real emotions which we in the audience seem to share with her. Typical I think is our embarrassment when her clothes are stripped from her by Bryaxis, the Pirate chief — usually when this happens on the stage it causes titters or lascivious leanings forward from some members of the audience. Instead we feel intense pity for her at her plight.

Again I felt the sense of loss that Somes was not playing Daphnis, and again I felt Blair was not at ease. In fact when it comes to the dance duel between Daphnis and Dorkon (splendidly interpreted by Ronald Hynd), it really became rather absurd that Dorkon should be the loser. Possibly this may be due to a weakness in the choreography and production, but when Somes did it, his nobility and sensitivity obscured any weakness. I feel that Blair has such a forceful personality that it is doubly hard for him to tone it down in these rôles which are essentially Romantic in conception.

New to Lykanion, the married girl who takes a strong line in Daphnis' seduction, was Georgina Parkinson. Here seems to be somebody who bids fair to matching up to Elvin, the rôle's creator. A naturally beautiful girl, she also achieved voluptuousness in her execution of the tiny *pas de deux* when she catches Daphnis unawares taking a nap.

The whole company dances the bas-relief patterns of the choreography with elegance and excellence. Missing was the singing chorus who give such added richness and depth to Ravel's glorious score. Craxton's settings would seem to need a certain amount of re-thinking though the colours of his costumes are as interesting as they were ten years ago.

The "package deal" programmes which encased both these Ashton revivals have proved to be a resounding success — artistically and at the box-office. In *Antigone,* which preceded *Symphonic Variations* on October 9, Oedipus and Jocasta had a new set of male children — David Drew as Polynices and Keith Rosson as Etiocles. Actually Rosson has been playing Etiocles since Gary Burne departed for Stuttgart, but it has now crystallised into a very forceful performance. David Drew has taken over the rôle of Polynices from David Blair and somehow it fits him like a glove. In many ways Drew could be called Britain's John Kriza, for not only does he bear a strong resemblance to American Ballet Theatre's original principal dancer but he also has the quality of belonging to every part he takes over.

Somehow I had always hoped that this Cranko ballet would mature with the years, and although the company do everything in their power to bring out the tragedy, the basic structure is so weak that the cracks are more noticeable than ever — it is only a matter of time before the whole edifice crumbles away.

How different is Fokine's *Petrushka,* which opened the other "package deal" programme on October 21, created fifty years ago and still going strong. The reason of course lies in the basic structure, which is as sound as a bell, plus Stravinsky's score and Benois' marvellous designs — all of which are so closely woven into the general tapestry as to be inseparable. The crowd scenes have been considerably strengthened since the Royal Ballet first revived this work in 1957. They are really starting to live, even if the production of the two street dancers in the opening scene is still pathetically weak. The lighting remains the worst thing about the production as it gives no feeling of atmosphere or time — the crisp cold air of a Leningrad day should become overcast as snow threatens, and as snow falls so should night, a proper night lit only by the illuminations from the fairground.

Nadia Nerina as the Ballerina has improved her characterisation of the cold heartless little bitch. Not yet as good as Elaine Fifield, by far the best of the Royal Ballet dancers to play this part, but gradually moving up. It is hard for Grant to convince us that his veins run with sawdust rather than rich blood in his portrayal of Petrushka, yet in every other respect what he does amounts to a notable achievement. Keith Rosson's Blackamoor is soundly sketched-in and it needs time before he can achieve the true portrait of the empty sensuous dolt. Now that the Royal Ballet is getting this masterpiece back into something like good shape, they should make it their business to continue the good work — eventually they may become its guardians. **P. W.**

Cast changes

DESPITE all the things that are wrong with the Royal Ballet's *Petrushka,* the principal rôles are, in my view, usually well played. I can well understand anyone preferring Brian Shaw's interpretation of the title-rôle to Alexander Grant's; I can understand, but I think otherwise, and they are both so basically different that they do not allow room for wholehearted admiration of both.

Shaw, who returned to the rôle on October 27, dances the part with rare brilliance. To a far greater extent than Grant, he succeeds in bringing a feeling of puppet articulation to his dancing, so that his limbs really do seem to be tied together with string and his body filled with sawdust. At a technical level this is a fine achievement, and I can also accept that his interpretation, more historically accurate than Grant's highly individual reading, is completely valid. Indeed, to judge from his *Memoirs* it is much more in accordance with Fokine's own wishes. Yet, to my mind, Shaw over-stresses the sentimentality and mute pathos of the part. His interpretation raises an interesting question. Should a dancer aim at historic authenticity, or try to conceive the part, as I feel Grant does, in terms of present-day validity? Before you answer, ask yourself whether we would thank any contemporary actor for performing Hamlet in the manner of Shakespeare's Burbage, or for that matter would we want Fonteyn to dance Aurora like Carlotta Brianzi?

On November 4, Antoinette Sibley was brought in to *Symphonic Variations,* for

SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS: *New to this Ashton ballet are Gaham Usher and David Blair, who are seen on either side of Margot Fonteyn in the revival of this important work. Below, Anya Linden(David Blair, Margot Fonteyn, Annette Page and Brian Shaw in another moment from the same revival.* *Photos: Anthony Crickmay.*

the first time, taking the place of Anya Linden. With all respect to Linden, who is having a good season, it proved a change for the better. Musically and physically, Sibley fitted in with Fonteyn and Page in a way that Linden did not, and as a result the whole performance took fire. Blair, incidentally, seemed much more at home in Somes' rôle than hitherto and danced with a flash of his true spirit and nerve. All in all it was as good a *Symphonic* as we have had since that night in 1946 when Ashton first demonstrated that the then Sadler's Wells Ballet had taken over Covent Garden for good. **C. B.**

The Linden-Gilpin Giselle

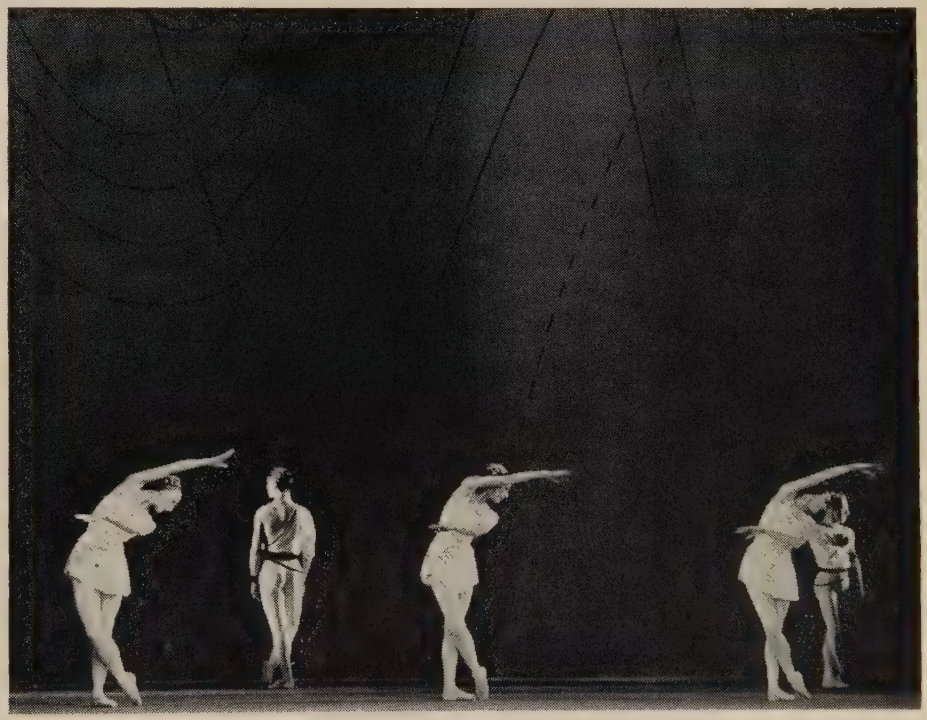
BERIOSOVA'S Giselle is perhaps the most suitable for the Royal Opera House. It has qualities of amplitude and big moments slightly exaggerated in theatrical effect which reach the farthest corners of the auditorium. On the other hand, I am inclined to think that Anya Linden's interpretation is a better one, even though it neither carries so well nor fits into the overblown production. As I've implied, it is in no sense a traditional ballerina display. She does not turn Giselle into the type of vague, tragic ninny who importunes the audience's sympathy and indulgence from the outset. Neither is her Giselle a labour of assembly — the results of a pseudo-scientific approach via the sharp eye for detail which allows the dancer to build up a cluttered portrait piece by piece out of appropriate psychological touches. Linden's portrait is detailed, but it mustn't be itemised, for every mood, action and caprice of Giselle seems to spring from within her, leaving an impression that she has made a complete fusion of the character with her own nature.

She is also that rare phenomenon: a Giselle equally good in both acts. Her lovely appearance gives her a distinct start over her rivals and Act 2 alone is much enhanced by so small a matter as a simple, but beautiful, hair-style. Her dancing never aims for sensationalism, and even that athletic Act I solo, which seems so out of character for the work, is made as unspectacular as possible.

The most memorable feature of a performance that was at all times plausible, touching and, especially, spontaneous, was her line in Act 2. Whether her slightly tilted *arabesque,* or her *ports de bras,* with the hands palms downward and fingers softly arranged, were deliberate, I'd not care to say, because no other dancer seems to work in quite the same manner as Linden. None the less, they captured an utterly charming and seemingly authentic period style.

John Gilpin's Albrecht has attractive qualities, too, and once he has full measure of this unfamiliar production, he will no doubt be able to erase the occasional stilted effect. His Albrecht is clearly a romantic at heart, a charmer in the ballet's best sentimental traditions. Act II's mood of anguish was created much more vividly than the first act's romance, and he made the laudable attempt of trying to incorporate his solos into the action by pleas for mercy to the Queen while dancing. Something, however, must be done about his Act I doublet, which makes him look short-legged.

Though I've been a rather unrestrained admirer of Deanne Bergsma's dancing, she must now strengthen her acting as the Queen of the Wilis, especially facial gestures in all that white glare. Finally, Franklin White's Hilarion was a walking anthology of cloak-and-dagger mannerisms, Vyvyan Lorrayne a stereotyped Bathilde, while Merle Park and Bryan Lawrence executed a rather violent "Peasant" *pas de deux.* I prefer Annette Page's subdued



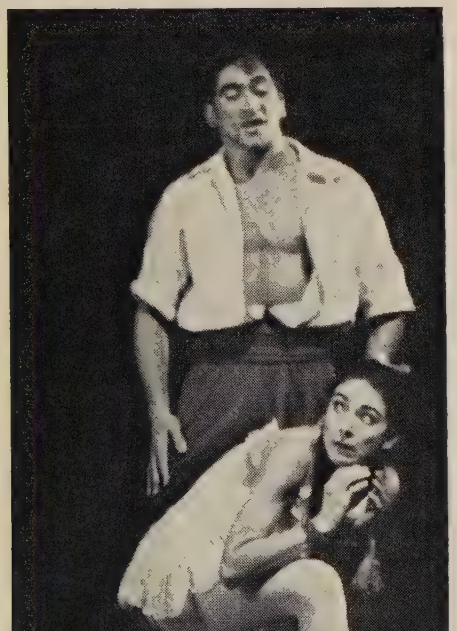
DAPHNIS AND CHLOE: *Above, Margot Fonteyn and David Blair, in the title rôles, with the* corps de ballet *in a moment from the last scene of Ashton's work to Ravel music. Below left: Fonteyn and Alexander Grant, as Bryaxis, in the second scene from the same work.* *Photos: Anthony Crickmay.*

Dresden niceties in this to Park, who seems to be trying to inject more virtuoso balances and flourishes than the choreography either permits or deserves.

E. C. Mason.

THE ROYAL BALLET at Oxford

THE Royal Ballet's smaller company, those unsung heroes of the suitcase, are still circling around England, like their colleagues in Rambert and Festival Ballet. Nowadays there are many more performances given by British companies outside London than inside, a circumstance that should give us food for thought. On the other hand, while the Provinces (taken as a non-existent whole) see more ballet than London, they have far less variety. This I think is largely the fault of the Provinces. Denied ballet all the year round, there is little opportunity for the building of regular provincial audiences, and as a consequence such audiences as are attracted to the itinerant companies tend to be even more conservative than in London.



The problem of introducing variety to the provincial ballet scene is thorny. Of course, it would be nice for the Rambert to tour, say, a Tudor programme, or for the Royal Ballet to tour, say, *Scènes de Ballet,* but the box-office is an implacable god which demands its tribute. It is very easy to criticise the touring groups for unadventurousness, but faced with audiences who know what they like and only like what they know, it is a little difficult to blame such organisations for playing safe when to live dangerously might only result in dying quickly.

It is therefore much to the credit of the Royal Ballet that this season it has cautiously expanded its modern repertory, and when I saw the company during its fortnight in Oxford (admittedly this was an atypical repertory for an atypical town) half the programmes were given over to contemporary British works.

Two of these are revivals of ballets, out of the Covent Garden repertory at the moment, and both dating from the company's early days. *Les Rendezvous* and *Checkmate* are ballets of the 'thirties, created when the present scope of the company could hardly have been envisaged (or if it had been envisaged, then only by De Valois), and now to a greater or lesser extent they seem a little dated.

The idea behind *Checkmate* is interesting. It is a ballet about power politics that has been translated into the terms of a chessboard. Ballets using dancers as chessmen were once popular spectacles in the 17th-century, and not long before *Checkmate,* Balanchine and Stravinsky had collaborated on *The Card Party (Jeux de Cartes)* which was based on a poker game. But where Ninette de Valois' real originality lay was in using the chess moves not as a formal end in themselves, but to symbolise a deeper theme of power which was peculiarly relevant to its period. This, at least I suspect, was British ballet's *Guernica,* and whatever we say about *Checkmate* now, it seems to me that it once had a relevance to its time that our contemporary ballet sorely lacks. (Let me necessarily cover myself; it may well be that in creating *Checkmate* De Valois had no political motive whatsoever, and was merely interested in the melodramatic possibilities of two warring groups. This is quite possible, and certainly it does seem that the symbolic significance appears to have passed by its contemporary critics, who nowhere allude to it in terms of "the growing Fascist menace", etc. Nevertheless the association of *Checkmate* with world events, either in its creation or appreciation, and at perhaps a purely subconscious level, gave it an emotional pertinence it now lacks. A generation that has not watched Hailé Selassié crumbling to defeat will view the Red King's downfall with quite different eyes from one which has.)

It is difficult nowadays to feel any emotional involvement with *Checkmate* (which, of course, only means I can't) and the ballet's structure and more particularly its choreography cannot sustain the work without. The main faults of the choreography are an unadventurous repetitiousness, and a failure to match the choreography with the drama. Too often De Valois is content to entrust the narrative and even the emotional colouring to heavily histrionic gestures, while the dance itself is permitted to lapse into becoming a decorative background.

The décor and costumes of the American poster artist E. McKnight Kauffer (these are the second version designed for the 1947 Covent Garden revival) are undistinguished, although doubtless in 1937 the slightly varying original designs had an air of novelty about them. What does retain much of its forcefulness is the Bliss score, in my view by far the best Bliss ever composed for the medium. Finally, and significantly, the ballet still offers good opportunities to its cast.

Svetlana Beriosova's Black Queen is well known from her Covent Garden appearances in the rôle. In Oxford her blend of sinuous grace and malevolent power seemed more effective than ever. Desmond Doyle danced well, and as always he presented a fine presence and manner, yet his stiff-upper-lip acting needed more sensitivity. Henry Legerton was surprisingly ineffective as the senile Red King — I would have expected him to be outstandingly good — but Barbara Remington made an eloquently submissive Red Queen, while Robert Mead as one of the Black Knights and Phyllis Spira as one of the leading Red Pawns both danced with exceptional brilliance.

The other 'thirties revival, *Les Rendezvous,* is even older(!) than *Checkmate,* dating from those swaddling days of British ballet, 1933. It was in fact the first ballet Ashton ever produced for the Royal Ballet after his official appointment as principal choreographer. It is an unpretentious *divertissement,* all froth and giggle, yet surprisingly tough and endurable. What have dated beyond any decent measure are William Chappell's décor and costumes — very beribboned and boutiquy, and about as *chic* as a 20 or 30-year-old back issue of *Vogue.* The company is at present using one of the "white designs" (*circa* 1937?), although I have quite lost track of and interest in the number of times Chappell has designed *Les Rendezvous.* The time, I feel, has come for someone else to have a go — perhaps one of the new Slade people.

John Gilpin was dancing the leading rôle in Oxford. Like the Blue Boy in *Les Patineurs,* the part should have been ideal for him, but as in the companion piece Gilpin somehow misfired. His dancing veered between the dazzling and the bright, but his smile was far too flashing and his manner too cute. I suspect the answer is that Gilpin has outgrown this kind of part, or rather developed into a quite different style of dancer. He does, however, need more elevation and rather sharper dance accents. Here he was flowing far too much. Turner (I never saw the rôle's creator, Idzikowski) used to be very sharp and vigorous in this, and had fascinating variations of pace as he bounced along on top of the music.

Doreen Wells, a sweet dancer, showed all the natural vivacity and high spirits Gilpin missed. Her crisp technique whirled saucily through the difficulties, and her whole manner seemed to have an uncalculated charm and playfulness. She is a natural for *Les Rendezvous* just as Elaine Fifield used to be. Elizabeth Anderton, looking just a shade sulky, was nevertheless suitably primly pert in the *pas de trois,* admirably supported by Christopher Gable and, particularly, Robert Mead. The *ensemble* was good, even though they had some difficulty in negotiating the cramping set.

Earlier Gilpin had given a far more positive taste of his qualities in *Les Sylphides.* It must be some years since he last danced this ballet, but certainly I cannot recall him ever being better in it. It was a performance full of poetry (a word I rarely use about dancing) with a sumptuous feeling for line one rarely finds in a male dancer, and a most beautiful musical feeling. Nothing in the rest of the performance matched up to Gilpin, and even Lynn Seymour seemed marginally but significantly off-form.

Jennifer Layland has taken over two major rôles this tour; the older woman in *The Invitation,* and the Gypsy Girl in *Les Deux Pigeons.* I have only seen her in the latter ballet, where her characterisation was weak, her arms lacked authority and even her normally impressive elevation seemed subdued. She has, however, an interestingly wholehearted movement style with a flexible and potentially expressive torso, so she should be able to improve greatly on this early showing. Both Wells and Donald Britton have developed their earlier performances in the ballet, and now in their own boisterously characterised manner give portrayals that compare with the more deeply felt interpretations of Seymour and Gable. Antoinette Sibley also danced the Young Girl's rôle later in the tour.

It was Sibley who provided one of the tour's three new Auroras in *The Sleeping Beauty* — together with Merle Park and, making a most welcome return to the Royal Ballet, Shirley Grahame. In Oxford the debutante was Sibley, who has in fact danced the full ballet during the South African tour nearly two years ago, and also danced the final act during the last North American tour. Her Aurora was exquisitely schooled and bright with promise, but full comment on it can best wait until she dances the rôle at Covent Garden in a few weeks' time. She was very considerately partnered by Desmond Doyle, whose sterling value to this group seems to increase season by season.

The production as a whole is remarkably good in the circumstances, and is a credit to the company's Assistant Director, John Field. The conductor, Dudley Simpson, very sympathetic to ballet, does well with his orchestra, yet this company could still do with more dancers and a larger orchestra. The strain on a company of this size presenting full-length classics and appearing night after night is immense. Someone *must* persuade Covent Garden to fork out more money (even if it means putting off a few operatic guest artists) if (a) these ballets are to be presented in the Provinces as

GUESTS ON TOUR: Right, Svetlana Beriosova as the Black Queen from De Valois' Checkmate, *which she has danced with the Royal Ballet's touring company. (Photo: Tahir Khan.) Left, John Gilpin with Doreen Wells in Ashton's* Les Rendezvous *with the same company. (Photo: Anthony Crickmay.)*

This is YOUR man in T&T

Australian E. C. Mason, T & T's man on ballet, must be one of the few critics whose feet are as nimble as his mind. Mr. Mason, let's face it, is a dance fanatic. He dances, teaches, watches . . . and writes wittily, knowingly and regularly in Britain's new-style Weekly. Have you read T & T? You ought to.

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well as they might be, and (b) if permanent damage is not to be done to the careers of some of the most promising dancers in the country. *This company is not having a fair deal,* and I only hope the Arts Council, who after all gives Covent Gardens the money and also insist on these provincial tours, really understand the situation. I wonder if anyone on the Arts Council committee has actually seen the Royal Ballet (and, for that matter, the Ballet Rambert) on tour, and whether any of them understand the difficulties under which these people are working. I also hope the Arts Council subscribes to a Press Cuttings agency. (Press Cuttings agencies, please note!)

Having completed my by now ritual banging of head against this particular brick-wall (my solitary well-wisher from Coventry can take heart; my skull's abnormally thick) I have little space to say much about the individual dancers. Hilary Debden, a newcomer from the school, looked agreeably assured as the Golden Vine Fairy, and Shirley Grahame was a promisingly lyrical Lilac Fairy. John Sale has transferred to this section of the Royal Ballet (it seems to have been an exchange deal with Michael Coleman, who has gone to Covent Garden) and was dancing Bluebird at this matinee. Steady and competent rather than exciting, it was a moderate first shot. Sale needs more confidence, showmanship and panache, all qualities he is more likely to pick up in this company than with the more limited opportunities open to him at Covent Garden. It seems a sensible move. David Gordon was far less exaggerated as Carabosse than when he assumed the rôle last season, and is acting with more spontaneity.

In the evening performance, the British Railways timetable (why, incidentally, did four trains that fortnight leave Oxford station anything up to twenty minutes late? This timetable is more optimistic than practical) meant I had to leave before the last act. As a result I only saw Gilpin dance the Vision Scene in *The Sleeping Beauty,* where his acting struck me as more than uncommonly good. But more of this when he and Lynn Seymour dance the ballet at Covent Garden next month.

C. B.

JOUJOU NICOLOUDI

THERE is a character in Chekov's *The Wedding,* a confectioner I believe, who starts a speech, saying: "There is Greece and there is Russia . . . there is Russia and there is Greece." There is indeed, and so far as I am concerned, I know far more about Russian dancing than I will ever know about Greek! However the opportunity to get better acquainted was offered at the Rudolf Steiner Hall on October 30 when Joujou Nicoloudi and her group presented a "Greek Dance Recital".

Nicoloudi, a choreographer of the Greek National Theatre, divided her programme into two halves, the first basing itself on an apparent reconstruction of the ancient Greek dance from archaeological and artistic remains, the second representing her own modern style, showing the influence of the American modern-dance. The resultant mixture of Hellenism, Duncanism and Grahamism was unfortunate. Good intentions by themselves never yet made a choreographer, and Joujou Nicoloudi had little but good intentions to offer. Here and there a static pose copied from a classical sculpture or bas-relief offered a moment of inspiration, which only crumbled away as soon as the dancers began to move. There was too little musical awareness in the dancing, and the technique employed seemed either unassimilated or over-improvised. The four dancers, including Nicoloudi herself, worked exceptionally hard for comparatively small rewards. The best of the group was the solitary male dancer, Sotiris Nomikos, who was particularly good as a lithe and lively faunlike figure of Pan.

It was a great pity that Nicoloudi did not come down from the clouds surrounding the Parthenon to the good peasant earth of the Greek folk dance. Here would have been an opportunity to have extended her vocabulary with an authentically Greek dance style, upon which her modern invention would find a far surer basis. **C. B.**

Dance and Dancers ABROAD

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPERA

THE Opéra returned to ballet on September 15. As Jacqueline Rayet, who was promoted to *étoile* in January, was unable to make her official début under this title, Claire Motte was given her first appearance in *Lac des Cygnes,* and also chose great discernment in choosing to dance *Giselle.* Her portrayal had all the freshness, ingenuous and fragile charm of a little peasant girl. Partnered by Peter Van Dijk, who danced Albrecht with much lyricism, she expressed with sensitivity and justice the psychological nuances of Giselle, a rôle which progresses from its original naïvety of love to the fatal madness and, finally, the phantom character of the Wili. We can only hope that this new ballerina will be able to confirm the promise of her début. The perfect accord between Motte and Van Dijk — all too rare, let us admit — endowed this performance with very attractive qualities of harmony and strength of conviction.

But the truly outstanding event was the arrival of Maya Plissetskaya for three special performances on September 27, October 4 and 6. It is always dangerous, however, to exploit an artist's name, whatever her qualities may be. Proclaimed by some to be the best contemporary ballerina, the heiress to Ulanova, Plissetskaya did not fully seem to merit this prodigious reputation in her *Lac des Cygnes.* Firstly, the performance as a whole suffered from the arbitrary juxtaposition of two versions : that of the Bolshoi performed by the two principals, and that of Bourmeister, as danced by the *corps de ballet.*

Next, the first act was so drastically cut that it detracted from the dramatic character of the whole and especially diminished the impact of the third act. Though this adaptation of production may be excusable in such an exceptional case, these changes do influence critical judgment. None the less, the public came to see "La Plissetskaya" and on this count were not disappointed. Rather than merge herself into the rôle and depict the metamorphosis of the tragic, fragile Swan Princess to the damned daughter of Rothbart, she prefers to bend both characters to her own temperament. In this approach she differs profoundly from her contemporaries, Fonteyn, Chauviré and Vyroubova, or, again, her young compatriot, Alla Osipenko, who was

recently applauded here in *The Stone Flower* and *Lac des Cygnes*. Plissetskaya is triumphant rather than moving: she subjugates her public with a shower of sumptuous flourishes which rather suggest Tudor's *Gala Performance*. Technically, her undulating and supple arms eclipse her less remarkable legs. She is incontestably what the theatre calls a presence, and it would be interesting to see her in a rôle specially choreographed to give full play to her sense of theatre. Partnering her, Nicolai Fadeyechev, who formerly made such an impression here, was sadly overshadowed. It would be a pity to see this noble dancer, so gifted with real elevation, deprived of the gifts which once brought him to the fore.

On September 29, the Opéra gave a brilliant revival of Rameau's *Les Indes Galantes*, which though lacking the lyrical value of such works as *Castor et Pollux* and *Dardanus*, remains the prototype of French 18th century opera-ballet. Since 1952 it has lost none of its extravagant display. Only the performers have changed: Josette Amiel, Christiane Vaussard, Madeleine Lafon, Claire Motte, Jacqueline Rayet, Peter Van Dijk, Jean-Paul Andréani, Max Bozzoni, Lucien Duthoit and Raoul Bari replace Vyroubova, Daydé, Bardin, Lifar and Renault.

BALLET NATIONAL DE DANSES FRANCAISES

FOLLOWING months of extensive preparation, the *Ballet Nationale de Danses Françaises*, founded this year by Therese Palau and Jacques Douai, made its début on September 13 at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées. The company, which was warmly received, is to give another Parisian season commencing on October 30 at the Théâtre de la Gaîté Lyrique.

For the past 10 years these two collaborators have been discovering and recreating the old dances and songs. Though it has not the exotic forcefulness of the folk-lore of Central Europe or the Soviet Union, French folk-lore has a diversity and originality which makes it an attractive study. There are two possible ways to bring it to the stage — either to reconstruct it patiently and present it as authentically as possible (a noble enterprise, but a difficult one to realise in terms of theatre), or, while remaining faithful to the inspiration, to make a synthesis suitable for the stage. Endowed as they are with refinement of taste, Palau and Douai have chosen this second course. And indeed it needed their instinct and discipline to create this programme, which is unpretentious and agreeable.

NATIONAL HUNGARIAN BALLET

FOLLOWING much delay due to diplomatic difficulties, the Hungarian National Ballet returned on October 3 for a season at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra. As on its previous visits the public appreciated the teamwork and the dynamism of this folk-dance troupe — the bottle dances and stick dances, the pleated skirts with their dazzling embroidery, the swinging plaits and the nervous clicking of heels — all retained their attraction under Miklos Rabai's direction. Its interest lies mainly in the brevity of the items and the speed of the *enchaînements*. Unfortunately, the melodramatic story, *Maïtresse de Barcasi*, which is based on an old Transylvanian legend, proved over-ambitious and disappointing. Indeed it will be quickly forgotten in favour of the dances we already know, but continue to applaud.

NEWS IN BRIEF

TO mark the Soviet Exhibition in Paris, the Choir and Dancers from Archangel and the Caucasian troupe from Daghestan gave performances from September 12 to October 15 at the Palais des Sports.

THE International Ballet of the Marquis de Cuevas danced in Tel-Aviv from October 10 to 27. They are now preparing for a tour of Germany with Yvette Chauviré as guest-artist in *Giselle* and *The Sleeping Beauty*. This will be followed by a tour of Italy, with Claire Motte as guest, and later Scandinavia. Raymond Larrain is preparing an elaborate version of *A Thousand and One Nights*, whose acts will be entrusted to various choreographers and composers, with décors and costumes for the spectacle by Larrain himself.

ANDRE PROKOVSKY has left the De Cuevas company to join the Roland Petit group, with whom he will dance in France and Belgium, and a projected season in Paris, where Petit is hoping to stage a new programme at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra. Furthermore, there is a possibility of Petit choreographing a programme for the Opéra. This is likely to comprise three works — the first to give scope to the more promising young dancers, the second to be entrusted to the stars, while Petit himself will dance in the third, probably with Violette Verdy. This will have a score by Henri Dutilleux and a scenario by Anouilh.

Marie-Françoise Christout.

AMERICA

THE LENINGRAD KIROV BALLET

AN additional engagement at New York City's Madison Square Garden, immediately following their three-week season at the Metropolitan Opera House, kept this marvellous company in the dominant position in dance here despite the fact that American Ballet Theatre and Jerome Robbins' "Ballets: U.S.A." were having concurrent seasons.

Though the huge, barn-like Garden is not an ideal setting for ballet, that fact seemed purely incidental in so far as the quality of the performances was concerned. The full-length *Swan Lake* was mounted here without scenery and alternated with Gala Programmes Number 1 and 2. Among the highlights of this prolonged engagement were the first time that the lovely Kolpakova was partnered by her husband, Vladilen Semenov, in *The Nutcracker*, and Oleg Kuznetsov in his first New York appearance as the Jester in *Swan Lake*, and a very authoritative performance it was. It was also deeply rewarding to have a second opportunity to view Makarova in the Prelude of Fokine's *Chopiniana* and to observe this company's final act of *The Sleeping Beauty*.

As reported in last month's issue, this company's prime interest is obviously in what might well be termed "pure dance", first and foremost, and any implications of drama or mime are, apparently, purely coincidental. In the case of the Leningrad Kirov Ballet, however, this does not seem as major a defect as one might first imagine because their dancing is glorious. As a matter of fact, after seeing this company, one begins to wonder just how important the Diaghilev era really was aside from the fact that it introduced Russian ballet to the Western world and provided some chic, if not long-enduring, collaborations of contemporary artists, musicians and choreographers with, generally, less emphasis on choreography and dancing. (Obviously, a fusion of all of the elements of the arts *can* enhance the overall effect of a ballet, especially when they are brilliantly combined, but, in the final analysis, it's the dancing that must be paramount.) Certainly the Leningrad Kirov Ballet evidences a glorious continuity, and it provides those who are interested with enormous inspiration for fresh experimentation.

AMERICAN BALLET THEATRE

AMERICAN Ballet Theatre's New York Season, which took place at the 54th Street Theatre, and on a stage far too small, could not have opened more inauspiciously than it did with a programme that was obviously planned only so that it could put on all of the principals in one performance. The fact that almost the entire Leningrad Kirov Ballet were on hand in the audience made the evening particularly embarrassing for many of the rest of us. A listless and lack-lustre performance of *Les Sylphides* opened the programme. The first New York performance of Birgit Cullberg's *Moon Reindeer*, with the usually expert Lupe Serrano and Royes Fernandez in the leads, appeared miscast and underrehearsed. Herbert Ross's *Caprichos*, in a poor performance, added to the gloom of the evening. The one bright spot was a new re-staging of Antony Tudor's *Gala Performance*, considerably broader and somewhat less subtle than his original version which we saw performed here by Ballet Rambert, was re-staged by the choreographer himself. Mariane Orlando, Toni Lander and Elisabeth Carroll, as respectively, the Russian, French and Italian ballerinas, had not quite assimilated the necessary variances in style at the first performance, but this was somewhat overcome as the season progressed. Most of the first night excitement, one must add, was generated by the presence of the Leningrad Kirov Ballet personnel who were on the wrong side of the footlights.

The second night, however, was a completely different story. (American Ballet Theatre should henceforth make it a practice to present their second night programmes on First Night.) The first excitement of the season was the finest performance seen here to date of Birgit Cullberg's *Miss Julie* as it was performed by Toni Lander, formerly of the Royal Danish Ballet, and Caj Selling, on leave this season from the Royal Swedish Ballet. Although each have appeared in these rôles elsewhere, this was their first performance together, and they provided a dramatic unity and emphasis that has heretofore been missing from previous productions that we have seen in New York. As a matter of fact, this ballet gave evidence of what might well be termed American Ballet Theatre's "Scandinavian wing". (Mariane Orlando, also on loan from the Royal Swedish Ballet, made most noteworthy contributions throughout the season and proved herself to be an actress-dancer of uncommon gifts and ability.)

At the third performance, Toni Lander emerged as a beautiful, and very musically-minded, Odette in American Ballet Theatre's second-act version of *Swan Lake*. She danced with a fine "line" and elegance and was, additionally, and importantly, warm, womanly and human. Indeed, Lander, who seemed shy and withdrawn during American Ballet Theatre's Spring season, has returned as one of the true treasures of this company. At the same performance, the world

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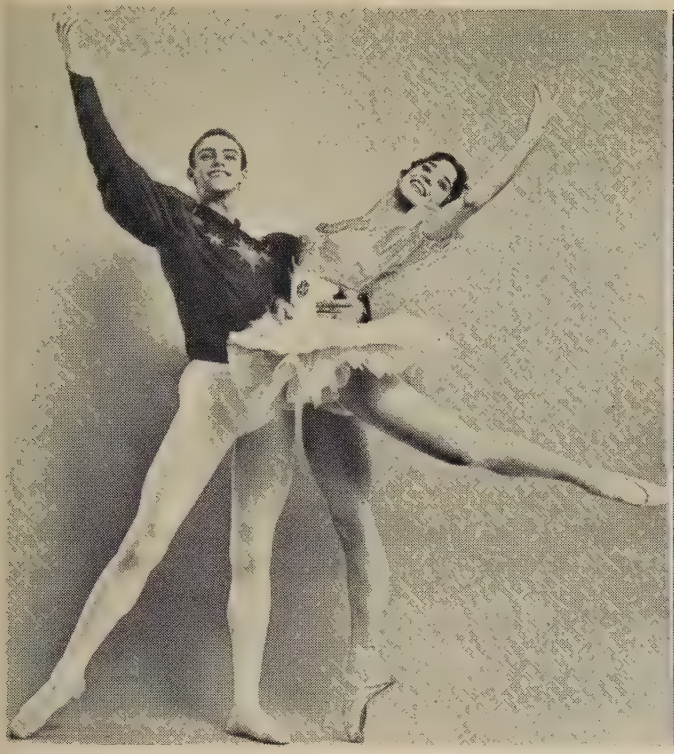

VISITORS AND A PRODIGAL: Left, two Swedish guests with Ballet Theatre — Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling of the Royal Swedish Ballet — in Grand Pas—Glazounov *(Photo: Jack Mitchell). Right, Edward Villella in the title rôle from Balanchine's* The Prodigal Son, *which is back in the repertory of New York City Ballet.*

première of Birgit Cullberg's *Eden—Pas de Deux* was given with Mariane Orlando, as Eve, and Caj Selling, as Adam. Hilding Rosenberg's *Concert for String Orchestra* was the score that served as a basis for this ballet, and the setting and costumes were designed by Per Falk. Though this all-Scandinavian ballet will probably not make history (almost everyone, recently, it seems, has used the Adam and Eve legend as a departure — Martha Graham, Alvin Ailey, Robert Cohan and John Butler), there were some sections of fresh and inventive movement. However, one might wish that the dancers' leotards and tights were better fitting. Aside from this, Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling provided marked evidence of their respective dance and dramatic talents. Oddly enough, however, American Ballet Theatre's strange methods of billing did not give these two stalwart dancers the featuring they so richly merit. What a welcome addition they have been!

The greatest hit, critically speaking as well as from the point of view of the general public, was Harald Lander's *Etudes,* set to a score of Carl Czerny's music, as arranged by Knudage Rusager. Originally created for the Royal Danish Ballet, this 13-year-old work (why, one wonders, has it taken so long for it to reach America?) is an intricately choreographed and gloriously designed *exercise de style* for practically the entire company. Starting with the girls of the *corps* performing the most basic ballet exercises at *barres* covered in red velvet (any relationship, one might wonder, to Martha Graham's more recent *Acrobats of God,* which is a hymn to another form of dance?), it logically develops and flowers into the most arresting and complex choreography. Its leading rôle was danced ravishingly by Toni Lander and she was provided with noteworthy and dashing support by that virtuoso, Royes Fernandez, and Bruce Marks, a most welcome addition to the company this season, who previously had established himself as the major male talent in the Metropolitan Opera Ballet. In addition to these stars, an *ensemble* of 34 danced their considerably demanding rôles with style and polish, giving evidence that American Ballet Theatre can produce and perform a major ballet providing that they have proper rehearsal periods with the original choreographer. Since *Etudes* has been the first new ballet of major importance to enter the repertory in many seasons, one hopes that it may give the company a new lease on its artistic life.

Although the best news of American Ballet Theatre's New York Season was the triumph of Toni Lander, coupled with that of Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling, there also has been a considerable amount of praise due to many associated with this company over a longer period of time. As an instance, Lupe Serrano and Royes Fernandez stopped every performance in any *grand pas deux* because of their technical virtuosity and their communicative and warm personal styles. Another valuable addition to stellar ranks was Sallie Wilson, deservedly elevated to soloist billing this season, who performed with ease such diverse ballets as *Les Sylphides, Gala Performance* and *Caprichos,* all in one evening, and stamped each with her own individual talent. On the other hand, one ponders on how another newly-elevated soloist, Ivan Allen, got so far so soon. Aside from being downright inept and embarrassing in *Les Sylphides,* he is equally embarrassing in Act II of *Swan Lake,* lacks the bravura and brilliance required in *The Combat,* and projects nothing at all in the gaudy and tasteless re-staging of Frederick Ashton's delightful (when performed by the Royal Ballet) *Les Patineurs*

Later on during the New York season, Mariane Orlando and Caj Selling took over the central rôles in Birgit Cullberg's *Moon Reindeer* and made the entire work seem like something quite unlike what was shown to us opening night. One other work was premièred by American Ballet Theatre, William Dollar's *Divertimento-Rossini,* which turned out to be a meretricious and rather thin derivation of both Balanchine and John Taras. Speaking of Balanchine, one wishes that the master might be invited to re-stage his *Theme and Variations.* As now performed, it is now most un-Balanchinian in style and it would be preferable to drop it from the repertory rather than to continue to dance it in a style that approaches travesty.

To conclude on a more affirmative note, American Ballet Theatre, as a performing unit, was in much better shape than when seen here last Spring.

"BALLETS: U.S.A." NOT FOR US

FOR one who has admired Jerome Robbins' obvious talent and genius ever since the world première of *Fancy Free,* back in 1944, it is, indeed, a personal disappointment to state that the three-week season of "Ballets: U.S.A." was, for me, totally disillusioning.

New York audiences, contrary to those in Europe, found both programmes presented by Ballets: U.S.A. to be neither *us,* as a matter of fact, nor to their liking. The very, *very* Gala Première had empty seats in the stalls, as did subsequent performances I witnessed, and the press, to put it kindly, was extremely divided. Every artist, certainly, is entitled to his or her own respective view of the world, its problems and conflicts. In the past, Robbins has stated some of his own personal feelings in such masterworks as *The Guests* and *Age of Anxiety,* and, to a lesser extent, in *West Side Story.* Now, however, Jerome Robbins appears to be repeating a series of clichés in ballet. It is high time, I think, for Mr. Robbins to say something positive

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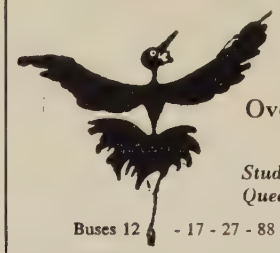

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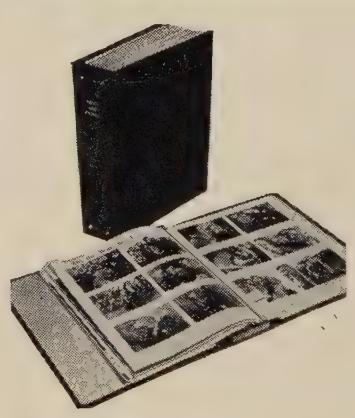

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and affirmative to the world. The duty of an artist, it seems to me, is to communicate, but I think most of what Robbins has to say is barren, negative, meretricious and downright repetitious. We have "had" *West Side Story* now (though I will be the first to add that Jerome Robbins raised the use of dance on Broadway to a new level in this musical), but it grows tiresome, indeed, to see the same movement devices employed in *New York Export: Opus Jazz* and, in a cheaper, shoddier manner, in *Events.* (At the first performance the front curtain descended by mistake, rather than Ben Shahn's symbolic hand, and many of us wished that it remained down then and there.)

After three viewings of *Moves* the whole thing appears as a theatrical trick, and I found it most disconcerting to listen to the incessant sound of point slippers banging on the stage floor, the breathing of the dancers, which was audible even in the middle of the stalls, as was the obvious, at least to me, visibly mouthed counting by some of the performers. In the past, Mary Wigman, Martha Graham and Doris Humphrey have each produced music-less works here (all of them superior to *Moves)* so the novelty has rather worn out for us. *Events,* on the other hand, appeared as nothing more than an up-dated but considerably weaker re-telling of *Age of Anxiety,* though not composed nor performed as well. Two ballets on these programmes should never have been shown, at least to New York audiences. One, *The Cage,* falls completely apart, in my opinion, without Nora Kaye in the pivotal rôle as the Novice. The other, *Afternoon of a Faun,* I feel, only had validity and a peculiar and remarkable essence when it was created on and danced by Tanaquil LeClercq and Francisco Moncion. As performed now, it appears to me to be more of an exercise in inter-racial relations. Another work, *Interplay,* Jerome Robbins' second ballet, requires a classical ballet company to perform it if it is to have style, and its present cast danced it more as if they were Broadway hoofers. Lastly, *The Concert* was fun, at least on first seeing, as performed by the New York City Ballet. Now, however, it is played "all out", as the saying goes, and it is most unsubtle. Besides, it seems a bit dated now to make sport of classical ballet, especially when most of this company did not have particularly strong classical techniques.

With its title of Jerome Robbins: "Ballets: U.S.A.", it appears obvious that these programmes and dancers were assembled for export only. After their three-week non-capacity engagement, the company disbanded with no further prospects of a tour in America or elsewhere. This leaves Jerome Robbins at a cross-roads in his career. Either he is going to continue as one of Broadway's most in demand choreographers or he's going to get down to serious work in ballet. For the present, at least, Robbins is evading the issue since he has decided to try his hand at the direction of two dramatic plays by Arthur L. Kopit, *Oh Dad, Poor Dad, Mama's Hung You in the Closet and I'm Feeling so Sad* and *Sing to me Through Open Windows.*

NEW JOFFREY BALLET

ROBERT JOFFREY, who has his own school and company, is also chief choreographer to the New York City Opera Company, and for the world première of their production of Douglas Moore's *The Wings of the Dove* he has choreographed a twelve-minute ballet that seems noteworthy in both its conception and importance. The libretto of this opera, based on Henry James' novel of the same name, provides an interlude, basic to the plot, dealing with what might well be termed "two facedness" or, to state it more simply, a divided personality. This ballet is entitled *The Masque of Janus* and features Gerald Arpino and Paul Sutherland in the dual rôle of Janus. Francoise Martinet portrays the Goddess of Spring with Rita Bradley and Mary Ellen Jackson as her attendants. Brunilda Ruiz depicts the Goddess of Winter with Suzanne Hammons and Marie Paquet as her attendants. John Wilson, Lawrence Rhodes, Nels Jorgensen, James Howell and James De Bolt dance the rôle of warriors in this opera-ballet which, for a happy change, is integrated with the plot and, what's more, provides a further understanding of one of the main characters.

Another high point in the New York City Opera's Autumn season have been repeated performances of *Carmina Burana,* choreographed by John Butler, with Carmen De Lavallade, Mary Hinkson, Scott Douglas and Glen Tetley as the dance leads supported by *corps* including Cora Cahan, Betty de Jong, Carol Drisin, Ellen Graff, Nancy Stevens, Jiuliette Waung, Louis Falco, Steve Paxton, Robert Powell, Koert Stuyf and Paul Sutherland.

THREE NEW WORKS FOR N.Y. CITY

THE New York City Ballet opens its 30th season and 14th year on the 5th of this month. This ten-week season, which runs through to February 4, will highlight three new works by George Balanchine, the company's Artistic Director. The most important of these will be *A Midsummer Night's Dream,* with Diana Adams as Titania and Edward Villella as Oberon, in a two-act production based on Shakespeare's comedy. Employing almost 100 dancers (including 24 children), and all the incidental music Mendelssohn composed for the several productions of the play for which he supplied the score, Balanchine will also utilise Opus 60 (1842), the Walpurgisnacht, written for Goethe's *Faust,* as well as the concert overture, Melusine, Opus 32 (1833) and other orchestral pieces closely related to the style. The scenery is being designed

ETUDES: *The revival by Ballet Theatre of Harald Lander's ballet which had the greatest success of the company's recent New York season. In front, left to right, are Bruce Marks, Toni Lander and Royes Fernandez.*

by David Hays and the costumes will be by Karinska. The première is January 17.

The first new work of the season, premièring on December 7, is a classic *divertissement* on a large scale that is set to Alexander Glazunov's ballet music for Raymonda. The third new ballet, which will be premièred on January 25, will be Japanese in inspiration. It is to have an especially commissioned score by the young Japanese composer, Toshiro Mayezumi, and it will present classical ballet in tutu but with make-up and hair styles reminiscent of the Imperial Household Dancers of Japan and the Kabuki Theatre, two companies that have appeared at the New York City Center in recent years.

George Balanchine's *Scotch Symphony* and Jerome Robbins' *The Cage* are being returned to the repertory and there are 22 performances of the full-length *Nutcracker* planned for the holiday period between mid-December and the New Year weekend. Another exciting prospect for balletomanes is that programming has been arranged so that patrons attending every Thursday evening during the season will see the complete repertory with no duplications.

Arthur Todd.

NEW COMPANY FOR GORE

Continued from page 11

No less remarkable are the other two principals in the ballet — Roger Tully and Harry Haythorne. Tully, as the psychopathic murderer, his eyes glaring, his body contorted tight with madness, and the gentleness of Halthorne, who ineffectually tries to protect the woman from the killer and dies ingloriously in the attempt, make up two memorable dance portraits. The rhythmic accents of the ensemble, led by Gore himself (languishing, for some reason best known to himself, under the pseudonym of "Henri Moor") are strongly done. Yet the music was missed — and through its absence the ballet lacked some vital quality of nerve.

One of Gore's new ballets (all of which are slightweights) has also fallen victim to the vorpel sword of the Musicians' Union. This is *Scottish Suite*, danced to Malcolm Arnold, which was reviewed when it was premièred during the summer at the Hintlesham Festival. Its present loss is a pity, for despite the unfavourable circumstances of its première, it had a choreographic zest which neither of the other newcomers possesses.

The Fair Maid is a somewhat out-of-focus wedding group. Danced to Bizet, and with costumes and settings by Andrée Howard, the work makes apparently use of its ostensible theme of "a ritual Engagement and Wedding Dance" and its brightness and periodic charm are dulled by repetition. Bathurst and Mottram cut rather wan figures as the Fair Maid and the Young Man to whom she is betrothed. It would have been improved with more interesting choreography and less display of bustling energy.

Bustling energy is also a dubious quality of Gore's newest work, given its first performance in Oxford, *Les Joyeux*. Set to Poulenc's Sonata for Flute and Piano (how Gore is attracted to French music!) this, however, has a spark of inconsequential gaiety *The Fair Maid* misses. Like so much of Gore's lighter work, the scene is too busy, with dancers splashing around, coming, milling and going like guests at an over-anxious cocktail party. Here, however, Gore has developed a neatly strutting mood, and the cast (Hinton, Mottram, Evans, Haig, Barrie Wilkinson and Jens Graff) dance with an agreeably appropriate sense of insouciance, here and there tinged in with nostalgia.

In general I was most impressed with this new group. It is, in my opinion, far more effective than Gore's earlier company, and only partly because it somehow contrives to look a great deal more settled and professional. At the moment I understand it is preparing to go on its first Continental tour. It will make a good ambassador, and deserves to be warmly welcomed on its return. But I do hope, as soon as finances permit, Gore will give thought to getting another choreographer. And I do hope he won't forget the possibility of Tudor.

WHEN BALLET WAS BORN

Continued from page 14

ters for the subject, it would be still left to the artist to organise the painting as he wished. Mantegna chose for the centre of his picture the device of the rocky peak upon which Mars and Venus preside over Parnassus. This central piece, around which are ranged the lesser characters of the story, gives the whole work its shape. The scene is laid out as if it were on a set stage. Could the *Parnassus* have been inspired by a ballet spectacle that Mantegna had seen? There are no known scenarios for this story in existence, but the subject is a natural one for a *balletto*. It might easily have been done at the wedding of Galeazzo Sforza, or even at Isabella's own marriage. The construction of a rocky mound in the centre of a spectacle is not uncommon and in the engravings of Italian stage settings by Alfonso Parigi Fiorentino (1590-1656), such a piece of stage scenery is often depicted. In his rendition of the ballet of Mercury, the god stands on top of a very similar central mound, while the chorus of dancers stand around on either side of the stage. The idea was certainly not original to Parigi and it might well be that he took it from court spectacles performed over a hundred years before. The theory gains credence when we remember that in Mantegna's second picture for Isabella's *camerini*, which involved the complicated allegory of Minerva chasing the vices out of the garden of virtue, there are several details that had appeared in the wedding feast spectacles at the marriage of Isabella's brother, Alfonso, to the widowed Lucrezia Borgia in 1502. If Mantegna actually was recreating some memory of a *balletto*, perhaps the new abandon and unconcerned frivolity of the dancers in the painting are a document of the change of style in the dance. After the turn of the century, the dancer had much more freedom to express himself as he wished, within the limits of set steps, and the licentiousness of his movements indicated a new liberation for the ballet.

Four years later Mantegna was dead, and with him died an era of art. No longer was the patron to be considered first and foremost when painting a picture. Like the dancer, the artist was freeing himself from imposed restrictions: the temperaments of geniuses such as Leonardo and Michaelangelo made it difficult for collectors to dictate subjects of commissions. The *Parnassus* remained the most successful picture in Isabella's *studiolo* and it stood as a marvellous monument to a time when patron and artist could take equal part in creating a work. For in this lyrical, lighthearted summation of the dance of the Muses, the strong-minded patron and the strong-willed artist held each other in balance just long enough for their independent ideas to flow through the work of art and become an invention common to both.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET
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November
27 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Blair).
December
1 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Blair).
2 *Ondine* (Beriosova, MacLeary).
7 *Les Sylphides, Petrushka, Les Patineurs.*
9 **(M)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Seymour, Gilpin).
9 **(E)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Blair).
12 *Les Sylphides* (Seymour, Gilpin). *Persephone* (World première of Ashton/Stravinsky work). *Diversions.*
13 *Les Sylphides, Persephone, Jabez and the Devil.*
15 *Les Sylphides, Persephone, Jabez and the Devil.*
16 **(M)** *La Fille Mal Gardée* (Nerina, Blair).
20 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair).
18 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Fonteyn, Blair).
21 *Les Sylphides, Persephone, Diversions.*
27 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Sibley, Rosson).
28 *Les Sylphides, Persephone, Diversions.*
30 **(M)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Park, Rosson).
30 **(E)** *The Sleeping Beauty* (Linden, MacLeary).
January
1 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Page, Hynd).
3 *Les Sylphides, Persephone, Diversions.*
5 *The Sleeping Beauty* (Nerina, Blair).
6 **(M)** *La Fille Mal Gardée* (Park, MacLeary).
9 *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Blair).
13 **(M)** *Cinderella* (Linden, MacLeary).
13 **(E)** *Cinderella* (Nerina, Ashbridge).
15 *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Blair).
17 *Cinderella* (Beriosova, MacLeary).
20 **(M)** *Cinderella* (Fonteyn, Blair).
20 **(E)** *Cinderella* (Seymour, Gilpin).
25 *Cinerella* (Seymour, Doyle).
27 **(M)** *La Fille Mal Gardée* (Park, MacLeary).
27 **(E)** *Le Baiser de la Fée, Scènes de Ballet, The Firebird.*

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December
4 The Streatham Hill Theatre, Streatham Hill.
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